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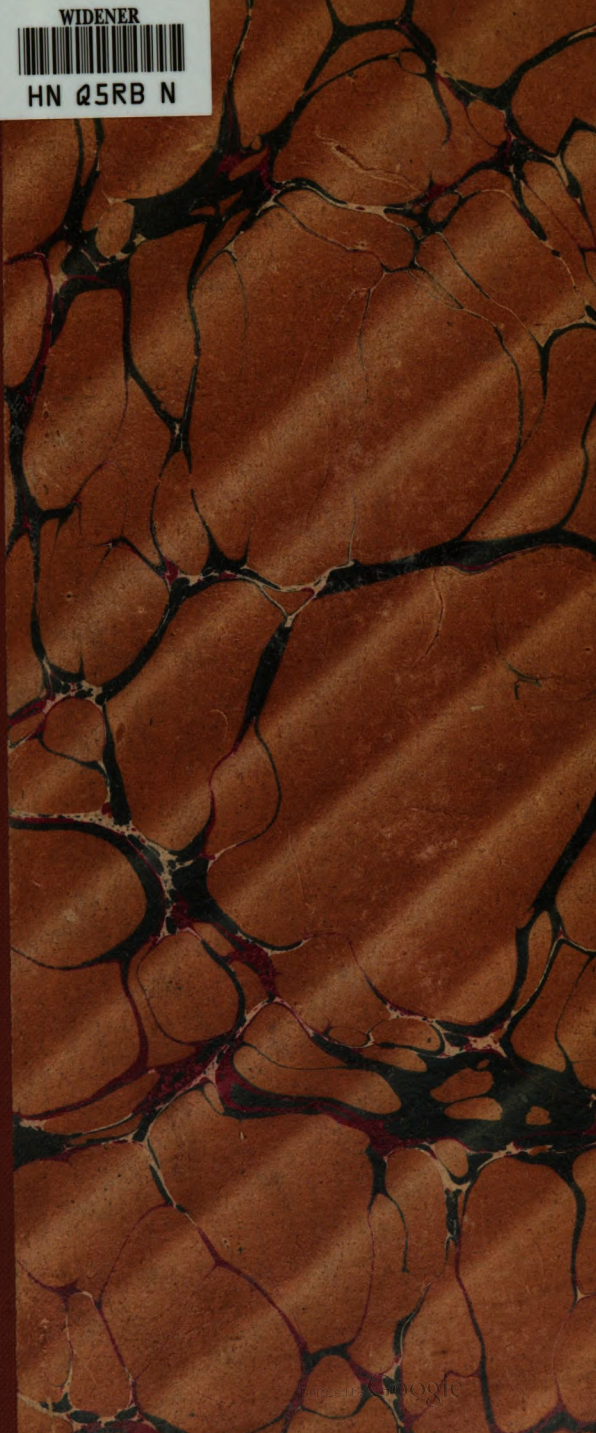
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Man Unfit to Govern Man. 1833

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FROM THE BEQUEST OF
SUSAN GREENE DEXTER

*this Pantheistic doctrine
my mind has been, and
many others have been, and
will be, a great deal of
its just reflection, and*
MAN UNFIT TO GOVERN MAN.

*in a way which will show
view, and being himself
nervous in all questions
which he has not been
able to answer it.*
AN ADDRESS

TO ALL WHO PROFESS TO BE GUIDED BY THE

RELIGION OF JESUS,

SHEWING

**THAT HIS RELIGION SANCTIONS NO POLITICAL INTERFERENCE
WITH THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD.**

BY

A CITIZEN OF LONDON.

"I expect to hear of a set of people who, because of the resolution I have taken to pass my life retired from the public, call the great work I have made choice of by the name of idleness; such, forsooth, who lay out themselves to worthier purposes, in cajolings, cringings, and feastings of the mob, to become popular."

SALLUST.

LONDON:

**SHERWOOD, GILBERT, AND PIPER,
23, PATERNOSTER-ROW.**

1833.

Phil 8592.6



Deftor Furd

PRINTED BY G. SMALLFIELD, HACKNEY.

PREFACE.

I HAVE used the term *Christian* in many parts of this Address to avoid the too frequent repetition of the phrases "Disciple of Jesus," and "Member of the Church of God;" but in every instance where the term occurs, those are the ideas I wish attached to it, for I by no means refer to the multitude of professors, good and bad, who pass under the name of Christian. It will be well when the real disciple of Jesus, *the anointed*, can (without having his object misunderstood) drop a name which was at first given by the enemies of Christ, and has since been held by individuals and nations in successive ages, connected with errors, abominations, and iniquities, which ought never to attach to the member of the church of God.

I found it almost necessary, before stating my opinions on Political interference, to take a view of the nature and object of Divine Revelation; but I call upon the reader not to throw down the Address at the onset, if we, perchance, differ on this part of our subject, because, though we may not agree in our premises, it is possible we may in our conclusions.

In sending forth this Address, I cannot but express a hope that my feelings and sentiments towards the present Government of our country may not be misunderstood. There are men in the present administration whose names cannot be mentioned without admiration and gratitude; men who, (if any men were fit,) are eminently qualified for human governments; men of whose good intentions I am so well satisfied, that to whom (did not my princi-

ples forbid) I would give my humble support and fullest confidence. But this administration, excellent as it is, will, I have no doubt, sooner or later, afford another example in favour of my principles, and of the insufficiency and imperfection of *any human government* whatever.

If I have displayed in this Address undue positivity or presumption, I regret it as a weakness, sensible as I am, that I *may* be wrong in my views, and if right, that I am but a humble instrument in support of that right; but that, in some parts, I may have had my feelings warmed almost to anger, I by no means wish to conceal. Too many instances have come within my knowledge in private life, where religious indifference and apostacy have been the result of political drudgery and political ambition, for me to review these cases without having my feelings roused against a course of conduct pregnant with such serious evils.

The Address is doubtless in a very imperfect form. It was put to paper at intervals, in the midst of many other duties, and severe affliction; and, as I had no friend "like minded" with myself on this subject, I was without that friendly assistance which is sometimes so necessary to detect an error or remedy a fault. If, however, I have written so as to be intelligible, and my hypothesis should appear to be correct, I hope individuals will arise, *willing* as well as *able* to carry on the work which I have imperfectly begun.

Peckham Rye, Surrey.

June 15, 1833.

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING seen with regret the bad consequences of a political course of life on many who profess the Christian name; having seen, in some instances, their faith wrecked on the rocks of political excitement, and in other cases their virtues buried beneath the cares of this world; and having, on my own part, felt the extreme difficulty and danger of such a course of life, I was led to examine, with serious attention, the records of our faith, to see if political interference be sanctioned by the religion of Jesus: to lay before you the result of such examination is the object I now propose.

I do not address myself to those, nor expect such to be influenced by my remarks, who merely *profess* Christianity; nor to those who merely assent to the evidences of its truth; nor to those who merely admire it as an enlightened system; but I speak to those who (however mistaken they may be in some of its truths and duties) receive it in the love of it, as the rule of their faith and practice.

Incompetent as I am to a precise application of *words*, I shall endeavour to make my object understood by a reference to the *things* on which I am about to treat. My purpose, then, is to shew, that the disciples of Jesus should lend no aid to the support of civil governments, nor adopt any human devices to support or overthrow them; that they should not be instrumental, directly nor

indirectly, in human law-making ; be neither kings themselves nor support kings ; neither make them nor dethrone them ; be neither legislators themselves nor make legislators of others ; but that the whole system of human government should be untouched by them ; and that the principles, rights, and duties, laid down by Jesus and the apostles, as also that the genius and spirit of Divine Revelation are incompatible with any interference with the kingdoms of this world.

In accordance with these views I humbly endeavour to regulate my own conduct. I, therefore, am never found attempting any political achievements in meetings of the world, either for or against the governments under which I live. I exercise no vote in the election of members for the legislature, nor even in sending men into the common council for the municipal government of our city. I neither retard nor support any of these measures or systems, except by any effects which my religious views and the performance of my religious duties may chance to produce. If the performance of those duties, and the inculcation of those views in the minds of those around me, are calculated to weaken or ultimately to pull down the strong-holds of tyranny and injustice, if they have a tendency to undo the heavy burdens and to set the captives free, I therein, as a lover of justice, mercy, and truth, do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice ; but to attempt these great moral results by any human inventions or speculative means, I should hold to be treason against Jesus and dangerous to our own characters.

Such are the sentiments I entertain and such the course I pursue. But let it be borne in mind, that any unjust extent to which I may carry my principles, or any inconsistency in my application of them, is nothing against the principles themselves. I feel they are in weak hands, and I now lay them before the world for the examination of

others; and if some, more gifted by nature, and more aided by education, should receive them, they may be enabled to draw distinctions which I have overlooked, and to enforce what I may have neglected to establish or support. If, however, there be any who should read this address, and still entertain contrary views of religion, I should be sorry if any thing I may say should, in the least degree, lead them to greater slothfulness in the performance of things *they believe to be right*. Dost thou still remain a politician? use all thine energies in promoting the great measures thou thinkest to be right. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, *do it with all thy might*." Let not politics be thy plaything; let it be thy daily work; pursue it not for thy own aggrandizement, but for thy neighbour's and thy country's good.

Let not the object of this address, nor the feelings with which it is dictated, be misunderstood. I am not one who take no interest and feel no *inclination* to take part in the exciting struggles of the day. I am not unmoved at the sight of injustice, nor insensible to the pleasures of a successful combat. If I were led by my inclinations alone, I should oft, like the Hebrew patriot, be tempted to smite him who doeth the wrong; but my principles forbid, and with a question that defies all interference, ask, "Who made thee a ruler or judge amongst us?" I write not to favour the man who, while he believes political interference to be consistent with his duties, is too indifferent to the wrongs which others feel, to assist them in their removal—the man who will not engage in what he believes to be right, because of the trouble and inconvenience to which it may expose him. No! I would say, if religion forbad it not, *every man* ought to become a *politician*. I write not to support the notions of passive obedience and non-resistance, because kings govern by a Divine right; for I dispute the very principle itself, and

contend that the disciples of Jesus ought to be neither kings nor politicians, and in all matters appertaining to my conscience, would exclaim, "Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto men more than unto God, judge ye."

I feel it necessary in this introduction, to make (perhaps at the expense of repetition) my object and hypothesis clearly understood. It will be borne in mind, then, that my question is not whether civil governments be necessary or not, but *whether the disciples of Jesus should take a part in them*. I ask not whether *any* government or rules of social life should exist, but whether it should be those invented by men, or those given by God through Jesus.

I am sensible that with these principles, I have to contend against the vanity and worldly ambition of a great portion of society, and also against the warm and generous enthusiasm of many sincere men; but I nevertheless shall proceed to shew that were all the kingdoms of the earth and the glory of them within our grasp, the disciple of Jesus should exclaim, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve!"

MAN UNFIT TO GOVERN MAN.

A CURSORY VIEW OF THE NATURE AND OBJECT OF DIVINE REVELATION, AS DEVELOPED FROM ABRAHAM TO JESUS, SO FAR AS TO SHEW THAT ALL INTERFERENCE OF BELIEVERS WITH HUMAN GOVERNMENTS, OR THE ADMIXTURE OF DIVINE LAW THEREWITH, IS NOT SANCTIONED THEREBY.

To the mind accustomed to reflect on the government of God, as developed in the Scriptures, the following particulars must be evident :—

1. That one and the same great design is clearly manifested by all his dealings, from Adam down to Jesus and the apostles.

2. That such design existed in the Divine Mind at the beginning, and was expressly revealed as early as the time of Abraham.

3. That the principles developed were the same, and the means enjoined to promote the design as similar as circumstances rendered fit and proper.

Viewing, then, the whole proceedings of the Divine Being with man, as one consistent, continued course of dealings to effect the same ultimate object, it appears just to conclude, that any principles clearly established at one period, or any prominent means clearly pursued at any one time, ought to be retained and continued at all other times, unless the great Lawgiver himself has declared a

change in those principles and means. With these positions admitted, let us take a view of the designs of God, in revelation, as made known at an early stage of his dealings with man, and at the means taken to promote those designs, and at some of the principles laid down or developed thereby. This sketch of the Divine dealings must necessarily be imperfect, as we shall touch only on those points which bear on our immediate subject.

It is very evident that the design of God was, to make all men *ultimately* happy;

That they are to be made so through the instrumentality of Abraham and his seed;

And that this happiness is to be connected with moral character.

That such was the design of the Divine Being, we gain not only by just and direct inferences from his dealings with his creatures, but also from clear and express revelation itself. In choosing Abraham, God declared, "I will bless thee and make thee a blessing; I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed:" and the Apostle has clearly shewn, that this blessing relates to their being turned from their iniquities. Acts iii. 26. It is important to bear in mind the nature and extent of this blessing, that, like the blessings of Christianity, (which, indeed, are only a link in the great chain, "for if Christ's, then Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise,") they were not to consist in mere enlightenment or knowledge, but in the possession of divine laws and privileges, and an obedience thereto, and that the blessing in its most extended sense has reference to a future state of existence, when the heirs of the promise, fitted by moral worth, shall unite in effecting the great purposes of God, and bring all mankind to purity, holiness, and happiness.

It would be putting a ridiculous limit to the nature of the blessing, to suppose it had its fulfilment in the knowledge and enlightenment which Abraham and his descendants shed around them, for pagan Rome, perhaps, did as much for the civilization of the world as Abraham or the Jews ever yet effected: while what, both together have done, falls greatly short of the glorious and extensive promise, that all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Seeing, then, that the design of God under the patriarchal age, and under Judaism, was the same as under the Christian dispensation and is not yet completed, let us turn to what has an important bearing on our subject, and view the measures (as far as relate to our present subject) which were adopted by God to forward this design, viz. *the means taken to bless Abraham and make him and his seed a blessing.*

If there is one event more striking than another in the call and selection of Abraham, it was the command to *separate* from his brethren, his kinsmen, and his country, "Now the Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."—Gen. xii. 1.

To the advocate of speculative actions, to the enthusiast who thirsts for proselytism, to the political Christian who thinks that no great object can be effected without some sweeping measure of human legislation, this call of Abraham away from his kindred and country must appear a strange mode of blessing him and making him a blessing.

The course they would have taken would doubtless have been a directly contrary one; judging from the mode of argument pursued in the present day, they would have urged the exercise of his mind and talents for the enlightenment of his own country, and in stopping the idolatry that was widely spreading in his native land; but

such were not the means which an all-wise God saw consonant with the great and direct object of Divine Revelation, but those which he adopted, if briefly viewed, will afford marked evidence of their suitability, and tend to confirm the view we take of the mode in which the great promise is to be fulfilled.

Had the great object of God been to make *all* mankind in this state of existence wise, virtuous, and happy, it might then have appeared the more reasonable mode of effecting that object by Abraham's remaining among his countrymen to instruct them by his precepts and example. But believing, as I do, that the design of Revelation this side the grave is exclusive in its nature, that *it votes and is to separate a peculiar people*, to fit moral instruments here, which are to accomplish the happiness of every family of the earth hereafter, the course pursued towards Abraham appears best calculated to effect that end.

There can be no question that Abraham might have effected much good among his countrymen, had he continued with them, and thus have been in some degree "a blessing." There can be no question but he might have retained *some* of the purity of his character, though surrounded with the vices of a wicked and idolatrous world; but the question is, *was it the mode in which the Divine Being intended to effect the blessing*, and would it have been the mode best calculated to form that high and exalted character, which the instruments in the future purpose are called upon to form? The facts of the case and reason pronounce it would not. The promise is unbounded: "In thee and thy seed shall *all* the families of the earth be blessed;" and the call on his moral improvement is, "Walk before me, and be thou *perfect*." How beautiful and consistent are the dealings of God with his creatures, the means with the end proposed! How deformed and inconsistent are the unguided actions

of men ! How widely different are the moral qualities which Heaven requires and approves from those which call forth the admiration and applause of the world !

Had Abraham come forward in his own country with self-concerted measures of improvement and enlightenment, he might have called forth the well-intentioned praise of man ; but it was by one private act of *obedience* the great patriarch won the approbation of his God. " For the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven, and said : By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord ; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee," &c., " because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen. xxii. 15—19.

Absolute obedience is the only test of moral excellence. Judging from the nature of man ; judging from that separation which God required ; judging from my own experience, and what I see of others, I think it reasonable to say that, had Abraham remained the companion of his countrymen ; had he continued surrounded with their enticements ; and, had his time and his attentions been employed in local and political measures of improvement, he never would, even with the best intentions, have arrived at that high state of moral character evinced under the above difficult and trying circumstances, and which placed him as the father of the future age. No ! God required of him perfection, and, as the first means, enjoined on him *Separation*.

High religious and moral excellence is not proved by an even course of moral seeming ; neither can it be attained to by the maxims and pursuits of the world, even in an enlightened age.

It can be obtained only by a close and constant study of the Divine will, by a delight in his laws, by a frequent communion with his spirit, by a vigilant watchfulness over ourselves, our actions, our motives, dispositions and

affections, by a lively consciousness of the various circumstances which surround us, and of our duties therein, according to the laws of God; and that such character is not to be formed in the midst of worldly associations and engagements, we not only see confirmed in the world, (and which we may more largely dwell upon in a future page); but what is more direct to our present point is, that it was not the course sanctioned by the Divine Being in *his* mode of preparing and perfecting his servant Abraham.

I dwell on the case of Abraham, because, to him were the designs of God towards his creatures first made known. To him were the promises originally made,—for God preached, before the Gospel, unto Abraham. He is declared to be the father of us all, “not merely to those who were under the law, but to those who are of faith;” and, secondly, because the dealings of God with him were so plain and striking, that they serve (as, doubtless, they were intended to do) to manifest the nature and design of the Divine dealings towards his creatures, and to open the mind to the better understanding of after-communications and after-measures.

In perfect agreement with the principle of selection for the purpose of effecting the *future and universal* blessedness of all mankind, was the choice of Isaac as the progenitor of this peculiar seed.

Had the promise of blessedness given to Abraham had reference, and been limited to present and to temporal blessings, Ishmael would have been, and was as much the heir to the promise as was Isaac, for God blessed *him* and said, “for I will make him a great nation;” Genesis xxi. 18; but it is evident that the selection of Isaac, like that of his father Abraham, was the selection of him as an instrument who was to become morally fit, and from whom were to descend others that should also be made morally fit to effect *hereafter* the great promise of making happy all the

families of the earth that ever did, or ever will exist, and that temporal prosperity was only a part of the promise.

With Isaac, then, were all the promises renewed that had before been given to his father; but no one instance, that I am aware of, can be found in which he endeavoured to effect the then happiness or blessedness of *any one family* of the earth—much less of *every family*. No! such was not his duty. Not even Ishmael, his brother, claimed his exertions either for his prosperity or enlightenment: not one command from his Maker to set about the reformation of the world or any part thereof; his course, like the course of his father, was to be one of obedience, not of will-worship, not one of unauthorized and uncertain exertions to do good, but a course of submission to the commands of his God.

The same remarks will apply to the life and history of Jacob: but these are the men in whose lives we are to read the purposes of God; these the men whose company hereafter is held out as a stimulus to obedience and virtue by the promise that the faithful “shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.”

We will refrain from enlarging much more on the subject as elucidated by the Mosaic dispensation, because we feel anxious to proceed to more direct arguments as immediately deducible from the dispensation of Jesus; but we cannot entirely pass over the selection of the Israelites as a people, and I would ask at the onset, is there any thing in the nature of Divine Revelation as developed in the history of that people, that authorizes the children of Abraham, through faith, voluntarily to aid, abet, and support, the governments of this world, or to become amalgamated therewith?

Can it be found in the covenant itself, the choice of them as a *separate and peculiar people*? Can it be found in the *sign* of the covenant, the rite which was to distin-

guish them from a "strange people"? Can any thing be made of their removal from Egypt and its abominations, to magnify the importance or countenance the pretence of reforming worldly kingdoms? Can any thing be gathered from their forty years' moral discipline in the wilderness, as a precedent for union with the world? Can the prohibitions which God gave them in their travels with regard to the kingdoms of the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, not "to meddle with them," be brought in favour of interference with civil governments? Do the promise and possession of a peculiar and separate land for their own inheritance countenance union with the nations of the earth? Do the commands given them with regard to the inhabitants of that land, to utterly destroy them and make no covenant with them, give countenance to the attempts of Christians in purifying, improving, or supporting the institutions of the world?

In short, is there any thing in the teachings of this people, either of their poets or prophets, from which any arguments can be brought in favour of the present popular practices of political Christians?

To my own mind, the exact contrary is the case, as the several circumstances just alluded to in their history clearly shew.

From the glance we have now taken at the history of Abraham and his seed down to the coming of Jesus, the following conclusions are obvious:—

1. That Abraham and his seed were selected and set apart as depositaries of the Divine law, that instruments might be trained and made through whom God would hereafter bless all the families of the earth. "For what if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"—Rom. iii. 3.

2. That the present and indirect blessing they were to the world, was not to be effected by their union with the

world or their improvement of its maxims and institutions ; but that in *them*, as a people, the existence, power, and providence of God might be seen throughout all the earth in the blessings he bestowed, or the punishments he inflicted, according as they were obedient or disobedient. And,

3. That to effect these two great purposes, it was essentially necessary, that they should be a separate, distinct, organized people.

It cannot, I think, be disputed that, had the Israelites united themselves with other nations, and thus lost their distinctiveness, had they assisted other nations and have transferred or blended their own enlightenment and prosperity with theirs, or had they mixed up the laws of man with the laws of their God, that the primary object of their selection, present and future, would have been altogether lost. Indeed, this period or result was fast approaching. They had already made void the *law of God*, by the various human traditions they had introduced. Ten of their tribes had become dispersed among the nations of the earth, and the whole had proved themselves as a nation unworthy of continuing any longer the exclusive people of God ; the object, however, of their selection, let it be borne in mind, was not lost ; a chosen few had been preserved, though "the rest were blinded." Instruments had been fitted among them to carry on the purposes of God. An eminent prophet was still among them who called them to repentance- they heeded him not ; when another and a mightier prophet arose, even Jesus, but they regarded him not ; "he came unto his own, but his own received him not ; but to as many as did receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

We will now turn to the nature of his teachings and the principles which he gave as far as concerns our subject, and we shall see whether the design of God by

the first great promise is still kept up ; whether those reasonable means of effecting it are still preserved ; whether, in short, Jesus came to destroy the law and the prophets, or to fulfil. But first,

ON THE NATURE OF CHRISTIANITY.

The "law and the prophets," as well as the religion of the great Patriarch, we have seen were marked by separation and distinctiveness, and that the great object was to call out and fit moral instruments for great and future purposes, when all who have been in their graves shall come forth, and every family of the earth that ever existed shall by moral discipline be made happy.

The weakness and short-sightedness of man make him confined in his views and impatient in his wishes ; and we thus find the great mass of professing Christians anticipating the divine Being in the fulfilment of this glorious promise, and vainly endeavouring to hasten and effect its accomplishment by their own means in the present age.

Let us bear in mind that the promise was first given to Abraham, and why should we expect its fulfilment through us, in this state of existence, any more than Abraham did ; and why think of effecting it by any human measures, while Abraham confined his exertions to an obedience to God ?

Let us not suppose that Abraham did not understand the promise and that we do. Let us not vainly imagine that an all-wise God has given a promise that he will not in his own due time fulfil, or proposed an object without having devised and sanctioned the means by which it is to be effected. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day ; and known unto him are all things from the beginning of the world." From the day when the promise was given to Abraham,

throughout every succeeding communication is the great object kept up, and in the eye of Infinite wisdom means suitable to the end adopted ; and this grand consummation will only be complete, when "every creature in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth," shall "acknowledge, love, and obey God, and ascribe glory, honour, and power unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 13.

"Now I say, (says Paul,) that Jesus Christ was a minister of divine truth from among the circumcision, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."—Let us, then, take a brief view of that system enjoined by Jesus and his apostles, which, through this dispensation, is to be adopted to prepare for the accomplishment of the great promise:

We have seen that the course taken by God with Abraham was a course of discipline, a training for future purposes ; that the course with the Jews was one of discipline ; that Judaism was a preparatory system : and we shall find that the present dispensation is a preparatory age to raise instruments for that period when Jesus shall come again in glory with his faithful followers, when the apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel ; and when the saints (morally fitted here) are to judge the world. To prepare for this period is the great object of Divine Revelation through every dispensation ; and the means laid down under the present as well as the past, are consonant with the end.

We shall find Christianity to be a divine system of moral government ; that the church of God under this dispensation as under the former, is to be a select, separate, and organized body living in the world, but chosen out of the world, having the revealed will and laws of God as the alone rule of their faith and practice.

And here I cannot but remark, (apart from scripture

proof,) that it would have been an unaccountable omission in the Divine Being, after his immediate guidance and training of Abraham, after the organized and disciplinary course he took with his people, the Jews, had he, as the grand result and design of such discipline drew near, abandoned his instruments and left them scattered, and, as it were, alone to their own wild and unguided measures of preparation and improvement. But I turn with a holy confidence in his wisdom, and expect to find that the nearer the dispensation is to the great, moral, and spiritual end, the more perfect the discipline, the more refined and delicate the duties, the closer the ties, the more complete the organization, and the greater the remove from every thing that is merely human, earthly, sensual, and devilish.

In turning to scripture, then, we find this to be the case, that Jesus did not come to dissolve or disorganize the peculiar people of God ; but, on the contrary, (as we have seen) they had almost unorganized themselves ; they were introducing for laws and doctrines the mere commandments of men, and were like sheep having no shepherd ; and that Jesus himself declared, " how often would I have gathered them together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not." The direct object of his mission was to gather them together, to reorganize them, to " separate to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The church of God had existed from the time of Abraham, but Jesus came to admit more members into it, to break down the middle wall of partition which divided the Gentile from the Jew, and to make of both one in Christ Jesus. Other sheep he had who were not of the Israelitish fold, them he would bring and there should still be only one fold under one shepherd. This people were not to be a divided people,—unity and union were to mark them as a separate, organized body. The same things

were to be ordained and practised in all the churches, and they were to be known as the subjects of Jesus, by their love one to another. The blessings in reserve for such a people may be gathered from the gracious invitation of God himself: "Come out (from the world) and be ye separate, and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty:" and the Apostle assures those who thus separate, that they shall be considered no longer "strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." "For ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people:" as God hath said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Over this select, organized body, Jesus is wisely appointed the *only head*. "All things," said he, "are delivered unto me by my Father." By his resurrection from the dead the Apostle declares him to be the "head of the body, the church;" that God had put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church.

The members of this kingdom are to preserve a perfect equality. His gifted satire Jesus directed against the inequality of civil governors: "The kings of the nations *lord it over them*, and their tyrants are called benefactors; but do not ye act thus, but let the chief become as the servant." The Scribes and Pharisees were solicitous for the first places and chief seats, greetings in the streets, and to be called *Master*; "but be not ye called master," said Jesus, "for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brothers." "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

That this body (the church of God under the Christian dispensation) received the most complete organization, that it was a government distinct from the world, was

most evident. It is, indeed, "a building fitly framed together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth;" a body in which, "if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, and if one rejoice, (such is the union,) that all rejoice together."

In the Scriptures we find plain directions how the government of this people is to be carried on: there we find what officers are to be appointed, their qualifications, and their duties: there we find the duties of members one towards the other, and towards their officers, and the church collectively: there we see the terms on which persons are to be admitted into that church, the controul of the church over the actions and abilities of its members. It is there we find most minute and discriminating directions as to different offences and disputes, and the conduct to be observed towards weak or wicked members; how to act in case of private offences or civil disputes, or of occasional error, or confirmed crime, or corrupt and wilful offenders; and, in *all cases*, a decided prohibition against any appeal to the *civil governments of the world*. The apostles recommended them rather to suffer wrong than to bring reproach upon a holy and peculiar people by any appeal to human authorities.

There is nothing omitted in the Scriptures necessary to constitute the church of God a complete government, fitted for every purpose of life. It is there we find the order the church is to observe in its ordinary meetings for instruction; there we find directions how the various members are to act, how the women, and how the men; the duties of wives, husbands, parents, and children, masters and servants; and it is there we find the relation in which the church stands with the world, that there is no union between a believer and an unbeliever, light and darkness, Christ and Belial.—"They are not of the world," says Jesus, "even as I am not of the world;" and it was the

well-called for and necessary admonition of an apostle; "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Such, then, is the system of Christianity, the church of God; and how, let us ask, can a man be a part of this separated body and yet voluntarily unite himself with the governments of this world; how can he act in the latter capacity and yet preserve his principles and perform his duty in the former?

Under a series of propositions (however unconnected) I shall proceed to shew that he cannot; and that, so far from supporting civil governments by purifying and making them more durable, and thus prolonging the dominion of man over his fellow-man, he ought, by a strict adherence to his own principles, by a warm advocacy of the government of God, to shew to all mankind the sufficiency of its laws, the importance of its duties, the purity of its principles, exhibiting in his life and conduct the prayer of his closet—*May thy kingdom come and thy will be done on earth as in the church*; may human dominion and tyranny cease, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ.

If this glorious consummation is devoutly wished, if we really believe that the kingdom of God and his Christ is to overthrow human governments, why (on the ground of reason alone, independently of other principles) should you aid in support of civil power otherwise than by submission and obedience? I shall be told, it is only to purify it; but what, let me briefly ask, would the friends of Don Pedro think, should one of his own party commence a reform of Miguel's government for the purpose of more firmly establishing it in the affections of his people? Or what would a sincere Dissenter think, should one of his own party set about making just such an alteration in

some parts of the Church Establishment as should prolong its existence, by making it more palatable to the vitiated tastes of the people? Could a sincere Dissenter respect such conduct? Then what will Jesus think of those believers who, instead of remaining inflexible adherents to his cause, unite themselves with those of whom it is said "he will destroy them with the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming"?

"YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON."

A little reflection would shew the impossibility of carrying on human governments consistently with Christian principles; the impossibility of acting from the moral, ennobling, and refined precepts of Jesus, in human legislation; in short, the impossibility of enacting and enforcing the laws of man without transgressing the laws of God.

That such is the case, I am almost relieved from the necessity of proving, by the acknowledgments of politicians and even statesmen themselves; but I submit, that with such an admission, is it not monstrous, is it not iniquitous, that men who make such acknowledgments should themselves assume the two-fold character of both statesman and Christian? With such admission, is not my position established—"Man unfit to govern man"?

On a late discussion in the legislative assembly of this country, an eminent statesman and politician, Sir Robert Peel, Bart., in answer to the Attorney-General, is reported (in the Times of May 22, 1832) to have said, "The Attorney-General, in the course of his speech, had said, 'I have myself acted as a criminal judge. I had to pass sentence on a person charged with having published a most scandalous work, revolting to the feelings of every man of common decency, not merely on account of its calling in question the most sacred truths of religion,

but also on account of the ribaldry and profaneness with which it treated them.' Now, he (Sir Robert Peel) could understand an Attorney-General saying, 'I doubt the policy of instituting a prosecution against such a man;' but that was not what the present Attorney-General had said. He had said, 'I sentenced that man to eighteen months' imprisonment; but so certain was I of the *moral* injustice—I speak not of *legal* injustice—which I committed in sentencing a man who sincerely entertained such opinions to such an imprisonment, that it was a relief to my mind and conscience, and I again felt happy when those eighteen months were expired.' Well, then, if the question were to be considered not as a question regarding the *policy* of instituting prosecutions in such cases, but a question regarding the *moral justice* of visiting the offences which caused them with punishment, he (Sir Robert Peel) doubted whether it would be *possible long to maintain the existence of government under the practical execution of such principles.*" Here we have acknowledgments from two persons, at that time holding high, official situations in the government of this country, openly declared, of the impossibility of maintaining the existence of human government, and at the same time of preserving moral justice. Here is a direct and a correct admission, that *legal justice* and *civil policy* have no communion with, but are in opposition to, *moral justice* and *moral duty*.

But it appears I have a still wider admission of the truth of my position. In a leading article of that most able and leading journal, to which we have just referred, we find this declaration: "Clerical magistrates are, throughout England, a hated race, partly because there exists a strong and just dislike, amongst right-thinking people, to the degradation of the sacred office of a

clergyman by its intermixture with the hardening duties of the temporal magistrate," &c. Here, then, we have another admission that completely concedes my argument, that the partial, severe, inconsistent, and "hardening duties" attached to governments of human origin, are such as degrade and cannot be performed by those who direct their lives by the pure, unchangeable, perfect, and benevolent principles of the meek and humble Jesus.

But I may be told, that this acknowledgment of the Times Editor relates only to the clergy. My answer is, the sentiment is correct, and applies to all the followers of Jesus. If the clergy are not to hold political offices because they preach a religion of peace, purity, and benevolence, why, let me ask, are those to whom they preach such sacred and heavenly principles? Can we recognize the maxim, that they should teach one thing and practise another; teach duties to others that it would be wrong for themselves to perform? Shall we thus encourage them still more to bind burdens upon other men's shoulders, that they themselves are not to touch with one of their fingers?

If the clergy are not to interfere in politics, why ought, or why can, other professors of Christianity? The supposition that they are, is formed upon a most lamentable ignorance of Scripture and of the religion of Jesus. The constitution, government, and laws of the church of God, recognize no DISTINCT ORDER of men; the church of God are to edify one another, for they "may all teach, one by one, that all may learn and all be admonished." The object they have in view is the same; the same heaven before them, the same means of obtaining it; to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; to grow up a holy temple in the Lord by forsaking the world and becoming transformed by the

renewing of their minds," that they may hereafter "be presented a glorious and spotless church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

To make an unscriptural distinction, therefore, among the members of this church, to set one class of men to learn the way to Heaven for the others, and to perform duties in their stead,—to say to the one, you may pursue the unjust, hardening course of politics, while we train our minds, dispositions, and habits, by the pure and sacred principles of religion, is to make a distinction unknown to the religion of Jesus, and is calculated only to fulfil the parable of the virgins, making five wise and five foolish.

Is it not equally important for one Christian to be prepared for his Master's coming as another? Is it not equally the duty of one to possess the oil of religious enlightenment and knowledge as the other? Is one only to pursue whatsoever is sacred, pure, true, and of good report, while the other is to tread the "hardening" and disabling course of worldly policy? If not, why make this distinction between what one Christian may do and what another? If there be any thing in the worldly duties of the magistrate or politician which is necessarily injurious to the pure and holy character of one man, why is it not acknowledged to be injurious to another?

Let me call on the followers of Jesus to think of these things. I know your reply; but I know it to be based in error. Be assured the religion of Jesus knows of no distinction among his followers. The sheep on the right hand and the goats on the left is the only division which it recognizes. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." How those who believe that the character of a clergyman ought to be an *example* to his flock can imagine why politics should injure the one and not the other, shews not only an ignorance of religion, but in-

volves the moral absurdity that effects are independent of causes.

Into what inconsistencies do men plunge when they go from the authority of Jesus and the laws of divine revelation, and endeavour to establish human authority over their fellow-man !

The incongruities which must arise from an admixture of Christian principles with civil policy, we have in part shewn. Christian principles will never apply to civil governments. Human government, independent of *all* religion, may be *consistent*, however obnoxious ; but immediately the pure and holy and humble principles of Jesus are intermixed with the fallacious notions of men, or whenever his authority is placed in alliance with the authorities of men, difficulties, hardships, and absurdities, immediately appear. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." I am prepared to shew, whenever it be necessary, that all the difficulties which hang over the most important subjects of legislative discussion, in the present day, derive their existence from the impossibility of applying religious principles to human government.

Civil policy and moral justice can never go hand in hand, not merely as respects such prosecutions as those in which Sir Robert Peel and the Attorney-General, as before stated, admitted they could not, but on all other points in which man assumes to hold dominion over his fellow-man.

The authority of Jesus, and the authority of Jesus alone, can clear the mind of all those perplexities and difficulties which attend such subjects as capital punishments, Catholic emancipation, the distresses of Ireland, West-India slavery, and the like. Immediately men endeavour on these subjects, to mix Christian principles and human legislation, the greatest inconsistencies and absurdities appear ; and, why ? Because the religion of Jesus is

intrinsically at variance with the government of man over his fellow-man. Such intermixture is like (to use the language of Jesus himself) "putting new cloth to an old garment, or new wine into old bottles," and the invariable consequence is, that both are made worse.

As a specimen and proof of such inconsistency, look at the late advertisement of the Anti-slavery Society in London (as follows): "The right of property in man must be entirely extinguished; no third party must be allowed to interfere between man and his Maker. Freedom of conscience and personal liberty, without which freedom of conscience cannot exist, must be secured upon solid foundations. That accountability to himself, which the Creator has imposed upon every created being, must not be controlled by any human power. This implies the removal of every restraint upon liberty not essential to the well-being of society; but it is not inconsistent with the rigorous enforcement of every obligation which members of society owe to each other. We therefore insist upon the necessity of substituting, for the present authority of the master, a system of legal constraint, of equal, if not superior, vigour, and of maintaining that system by regulations of police as severe as the case may require. In a word, we would abolish slavery; but we would establish law: we would supersede the private cart-whip, and replace it by the magisterial treadmill."

Would that my time and talent could allow me to comment on this fair sample of the absurdity which must ever attend the conduct of those who are guided in part, and only in part, by the religion of Jesus. Let me, however, only ask this anti-slavery political Christian, how he reconciles his notions? In all he states against slavery I heartily join; but if no third party must be allowed to interfere between man and his Maker, if freedom of conscience requires personal liberty, if "that accountability

to himself which the Creator has imposed upon every created being, must not be controlled by *any human power*, then how dare "he insist upon the necessity of substituting for the authority of a master" a human system (of many masters) "of equal if not superior rigour," and of "maintaining that system by regulations of police as severe as the case may require"? How dare he, and by what authority, abolish the authority of the first master, and *establish the law of a third*? By what authority would he set aside the cart-whip of the master, and replace it by a magisterial treadmill? Let him answer these questions. Remember, he pretends to argue from divine authority; it is from the principles of revelation he denounces the interference of "human power." Then I call upon him to shew me from what part of that revelation he acquires the right of substituting the authority of national government, for the government of the individual master; from what part of Scripture he derives the right of inflicting the magisterial treadmill more than the individual cart-whip? It is lamentable to see men stop short of truth, after having laid down some correct principles; but this is the invariable consequence of mixing human legislation with the government of God, or the principles he has given for his people, the church of God, with the maxims and regulations of the world.

This anti-slavery advocate appears quite ignorant of the directions of Scripture, although he pretends to lay down its principles as the foundation of his argument. Let him, I repeat, shew me his authority for taking away the authority of the one master, and transferring it to *many masters*. I, like him, am an enemy, a decided enemy to slavery; but being guided by Scripture as the rule of my faith and practice, I am as willing to concede the authority to a master as to any other "human power." In the Scriptures the submission of a slave to his master is

placed (let him ponder upon this) upon the same footing as submission to human government. The same Scriptures that tell me to "obey magistrates," tell me also that if I am converted, while "being a slave, to care not for it," but to be obedient to my own master in all things; but that if I possess my freedom, not voluntarily to put myself under the dominion of man. The specious assertion that "the removal of every restraint upon personal liberty, not essential to the well-being of society," is not inconsistent with the enforcement of "legal restraint," is as erroneous as the whole is inconsistent. Who says it is not inconsistent? Who is to judge of what will promote "the well-being of society"? Who is to judge of a man's own duties, but every man for himself; and is it not, then, as notorious as the sun at noon-day, that thousands of individuals consider *that* as their duty, and as tending to the well-being of society, which civil governors would deem otherwise, and on which they would and do enforce their "legal constraint"?

Then, what becomes of the position that "that accountability to himself, which the Creator has enforced upon every created being, must not be controlled by *any human power*"? The separation of a slave from his master by force can never be argued from the principles of revelation, much less that such unjust authority should be transferred to any other "human power." The religion of Jesus extends to every act and circumstance in the life of his followers, and perfect religious liberty can only exist when all human authority is banished, and man becomes accountable to the laws of God alone.

It may be necessary here to remind the reader that I am not arguing against the necessity of civil governments, (to those who will not acknowledge and act upon the government and laws of God), but against uniting the two; or, rather, against the followers of Jesus taking a

part in, and supporting such governments; but that they should choose which they will serve, for that "they cannot serve God and Mammon."

Civil government may be a necessary discipline for the world, and the cholera a necessary scourge, but it does not follow that I should support the one, nor attempt to prolong the existence of the other.

But leaving the contradictory acknowledgments of the advocates of a political Christianity, let us proceed further to illustrate the position now contended for.

The absence of an enlarged and lucid statement must be excused, for I find my feelings too much carried away by a deep and general conviction of my principles to allow me, even if I had the talent, to enter at this time upon a cold and minute description.

In the cases to which I shall now refer, I must be excused for not giving all the *whys* and *wherefores*. I will point out instances, and must beg the assistance of others in the proper application of my principles to them. If any correct political truisms or principles are seen to be in opposition to the principles of Jesus, and the first cannot be acted upon without violating the latter, it is not for me to prove how this is: it is enough for me, as a proof that even the best human governments are irreconcilable with the religion of Jesus, and that we can never have what the happiness of man requires till "every high thing (and all human authority) is cast down and brought into the obedience of Christ."

There are some objections which arise out of the nature of civil government itself, and others which pertain to the particular form or circumstances of the government under which an individual may chance to live.

Thus, how can a follower of Jesus join in a system a part of which system has a king for its spiritual head? We have seen by the constitution of the church of God,

that, to the members of that church, Jesus is the sole head of all things. The British government has dethroned Jesus, and made the King head over all things: then, how, without treason against Jesus, can any one voluntarily take part or lot in such a matter, whether as minister, magistrate, or common-councilman?

We have seen that the constitution and laws of God's people require them to keep separate from the world, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but is it not a correct political principle, that one man has no cognizance of the moral or religious characters of his colleagues or associates? What is this but basing his union on an irreligious principle?

We have seen by the constitution of the Church, that all its members are to preserve an equality; but how is this compatible with the kingly, ministerial, or magisterial character in one member, and that of slave or subject in the other? The plain, humble, and benevolent principles of Jesus are not based on false and subtle philosophy. The interested sophist may endeavour to shew that he can be civil governor over his fellow member and yet not destroy equality. I am aware of his perversions of "words to no profit;" but on every moral principle or political usage, I defy him to make the subject at the Bar *feel* that he is equal with his brother magistrate on the Bench. While one has arbitrary power and the other not, one rights which the other may not exercise, one honours of which the other is deprived, there can be none of *that* equality enjoined by Jesus, as the barrier against tyranny, pride, and oppression, and the safeguard to humility and brotherly love.

But not merely does the constitution of the Church of God, the headship of Jesus, the equality of its members, its separation from the world and its objects, prevent its

members from joining the governments of the world, but its laws and duties equally forbid.

How, and by what authority, can a political minister who is a member of the Church of God, legislate and bind laws upon his brother member, which Jesus has not sanctioned, nor the Church, of which he is a part, approved? How can he, as a judge or magistrate, doom his brother member to a punishment unknown to the Scriptures or the church of God; or, how can he, as Jack Ketch, execute that doom? The legislator, judge, and executioner, are all part and parcel of the same system; and it is as consistent with the nature, genius, and spirit of true religion, to hold the one situation as the other. The laws of God are the only laws which his people may support or execute, and those laws are clearly laid down in the New Testament. They allow and enforce an *obedience* to other laws, but they go no farther. Not a principle, not a precept, not an example in all the New Testament, to go beyond this, can be found—and why? “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”

Is it consistent with the authority of Jesus the Christian's only Lawgiver, and with the principles of his religion, for men to form together and enact laws of their own, to punish other men who will not so conform? If it be not, my argument is conceded.

The essence of religion is obedience to God and his appointed Head. The very fact of setting up any other authority is Antichrist. Let not the member of the church of God delude himself or others by a sophistical distinction; let him not say as an excuse, I will not become a legislator myself; but I may elect and support another; I will not become a magistrate or an executioner myself; but I will recommend others to that office, and assist them in gaining and maintaining it. What dif-

ference, let me ask, (and I ask with a desire for truth as deep as are my present convictions,) what difference is there between a Christian setting up and supporting a temporal authority in another, and his uniting the two characters in his own person? *And what is the Pope but this?*

So long as religionists legislate, we must expect the religion of some part of the community to be affected by their legislation. Then what becomes of perfect religious liberty? If it be right for them to legislate, it is right for them to enact and enforce those measures which they consider will promote the well-being of society; but how can they do this, without prohibiting what their opponents in religion may deem a sacred duty to perform, or enjoining what the other would think wicked to observe? If they make laws, they are right in enacting what they consider right. The fallacy lies in their legislating at all. I am aware I shall be told that they should legislate only on civil matters, and should leave religion untouched. Impracticable distinction! Who does not know that so various are the religious views and practices of society, that almost every law and prohibition affects in some way the religion of some class? Fallacious distinction! Who is to draw the line between what is religious and what is not? The error of such a distinction must be evident, indeed, to that man whose every thought, word and action is brought into subjection to the law of God. To illustrate this argument, let us instance the observance of the Sabbath.

Is not a legislator who believes that the observance of a Sabbath is obligatory, who believes that divine judgments, individually and nationally, would await its non-observance, justified in appointing such a day, and enforcing a regard thereto? Certainly, as a legislator he is. But as a Christian, how can he enforce that on me which I

believe to be antichristian, and on which the Scriptures say, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind" ?

So also, on the contrary, if the legislator should be of the religion of Paul, and believe every day to be alike, and that the new moons, appointed feasts, and sabbaths were now like vain oblations, and should thus be led to throw open the sabbath, would not a great portion of society consider that their religion was attacked, and their holy rest disturbed ?

Under this head, if it were necessary, various are the details from which we could shew that civil policy and Christian principle stand opposed. Political principles say, in a case now before our legislature, Do not interfere between the labourer and the employer, while humanity and religion cry out with one voice, "If it be right to legislate at all, defend the innocent and helpless, and stop the exactions of the cruel task-master."

Political principles in reference to our sister-island say, Poor-laws would be a curse: but Christianity declares that "whoso seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up (from any calculating principles of human policy) his bowels of compassion, in him the love of God dwelleth not." Civil policy says, Put down outrage, and make the laws respected. Christian principle declares, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of; for if they smite thee on the one cheek, turn to them the other." In short, civil policy requires individual sacrifices, individual punishments, individual injustice, for the general good; but the religion of Jesus forbids "doing evil that good may come."

One more point before we leave this part of our subject.

Civil governments authorize and, under some circumstances, *involve the necessity of war*. In many cases it cannot be maintained without it. To oppose war and bloodshed, therefore, on principle, is to oppose the existence of human governments themselves. Let, then,

the advocates for peace be consistent; let them draw back their interested hands from civil distinctions and human domination altogether; let them not perplex and embarrass a *government of this world* with their unholy and unauthorized admixture of light and darkness, Christ and Belial. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

THE FUTILITY OF HUMAN EFFORTS.

I WILL devote but a few remarks to this part of our subject, because, seeing as we have, and as we shall still more clearly shew before we have done, that it is contrary to principle for members of the church of God to intermeddle with the governments of this world, it is not of radical importance to prove that their efforts to do so are futile and useless. But as some minds are influenced by one species of evidence and some another, as some are insensible to the obligations of principles and incapable of seeing their application, while they are alive to the *supposed* effects and consequences of their own actions,—a few remarks on this point may be of service.

To some men the end appears to justify the means. To suggest, then, to such minds that the boasted results which, in the vanity or generosity of their hearts, they connect with their own efforts, are altogether independent of their puny exertions, and that such end would (according to experience and revelation) take place as well without them as with them, may be of some importance.

Had I the page of history in my recollection, I should not want for arguments to shew the futility of mere human efforts. Indeed, I may put it to any man's own bosom, who has pursued a course of politics, to say, whether it has not been a path of labour, vexation, disappointment, and surprise; whether he has not sometimes, like the "immortal" Nelson, been tempted to ex-

claim, "Politics at this time are my abomination;" whether his disappointments and vexations have not arisen from seeing all his labour fruitless, his most strenuous exertions defeated, the most promising arrangements frustrated; whether he has not with surprise and joy seen the long wished-for object of his heart at last brought about by some little incident or change *altogether independent of himself*; and, when all his own attempts have failed, amidst the jarring discord of political strife, the gentle whisper from on high, "he bringeth the princes to nothing, he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity, he bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, and maketh the devices of the people of none effect," hath not hushed all in to peace?

If such has been his experience, why not withdraw his hand from vain, unauthorized attempts, "lest haply he be found fighting against the designs of God?" "For he looketh down from heaven and beholdeth all the sons of men, he fashioneth their hearts and considereth all their works, he turneth the hearts of princes as rivers of water, whithersoever he will:" "there is no king saved by the multitude of his hosts, nor a mighty man delivered by his much strength. The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine."

Reader, walk not, then, in the counsel of men, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful; make the *law of the Lord* thy delight, and in that law meditate day and night.

The declarations of Holy Writ on this subject, as on all others, are borne out by the experience of man.

Not only does the politician perceive his calculations upset and his objects frustrated in the minute circumstances of his life, but he looks around him and beholds the exertions and success of a nation to-day, turned upside

down to-morrow. As an individual, he gives his friendship, devotes his time and property to the support of a person to-day, who, he shortly finds, was unworthy his regard, and whose political character and conduct are wholly at variance with the object he had in view: his supposed friend proves his enemy, and, when too late, he finds with regret that he has done evil instead of good in lending him support. Sometimes, indeed, the change takes place in his own mind. In his youth, warmed with political ambition, and elated with the false, though generous design of his country's good, he advocates principles and enforces measures which, in maturer age, he thinks were imperfect, false, and injurious; and with such experience before him, where is the man so vain and presumptuous as still to proceed in the uncertain path of legislation? Does he think, because he has seen the folly of his youth, that therefore his manhood is infallible? When he knows that even his general views at twenty were erroneous, his judgment mistaken, and his confidence even in one individual misplaced, can he feel confident at forty that he knows how to rule the destiny of millions, or is capable of leading them by any measures of his own to their greater good?

The fact is, that what the greatest of men *do* is but trifling: the grand result rests with the great Disposer of events. The very opposite to human calculations frequently takes place. Let, then, the follower of Jesus rest satisfied with obedience, and an adherence to the commands of God. The nature and magnitude of an action in the Divine Mind depends on its motive, its success on the will of Heaven. Let his laws, then, and his alone, be our guide.

Do we want instances of a more general kind to illustrate these views? Among modern cases turn to France. Behold the sons of freedom nobly dethroning a tyrant in

1830, and presenting the sceptre to a citizen-king, and for the benefit of their children obtaining a charter of liberty and justice. Look to her again in 1832, and we see the same parties violating the leading principles of their boasted charter, Louis Philip pursuing the same course that dethroned his predecessor, Paris under martial law, the press trammelled and put down, and, in short, almost all the supposed triumph of June, 1830, forfeited and lost; and yet men go on as if all the changes of the world were dependent on *their efforts*!

Recent events in Spain afford another case to illustrate and confirm our views. There we see the finger of God effecting, by the illness of a single individual, what the united efforts of all the political sons of liberty and justice have been for years attempting and unable to produce.

Many are the hours and days and nights which patriots have devoted to the dissemination of liberal principles in that ill-fated country, and many and in vain have been the appeals from the victims of oppression to the deaf ear of their bigoted tyrants. The flags of emancipated France and of free-born Britain have alternately waved over that land of bondage, and the blood of thousands has been shed to procure for it light and liberty. But all their exertions fell like snow upon a burning land, a land of ignorance, superstition, and bigotry. The heart of its prince remained "unturned." No human hand could effect this important change. Ferdinand still remained a tyrant and a bigot, calling around him and caressing the bloodhounds of persecution, and chasing into solitude every friend of liberal principles. Every human effort was futile; but the hour arrived when He "who ruleth in the heavens above, and among the inhabitants of the earth beneath," interposed. Ferdinand fell sick; the monsters by whom he had surrounded himself intrigued against him; Providence restored him to health, and thus, by this

little incident, directed his pardon and his affections to those whom he had before expelled from his shores, and enstamped upon him a suspicion of his once-loved friends of persecution. In one hour of omnipotent controul liberal principles acquire an advantage which ages of human exertions had been unable to effect. We will not pour out our lament over the woeful waste of human labour, of human life, and of precious time, which had thus been spent in vain, but would only impress (what it is our object to shew) "the futility of human exertions in the dominion of man over his fellow-man."

A writer in that very able and excellent work, "The Monthly Repository," (for August, 1832,) laments that man is *unserved*; he calls for a change, and says, "It is obvious that the present is an undesirable, and, we will assert, in firm reliance on the *intention* of the Creator and Former of our bodies and spirits, an unnecessary, state of things." He goes on and proposes co-partnerships or "joint-stock companies" as a remedy.

In another article of the same work, the writer (on Transportation as a Secondary Punishment, October, 1832) says, "Never, indeed, was there a more humiliating failure of an aim: never a more complete reverse of all anticipated results: never were bright expectations of public benefit met by a more blank disappointment. Instead of the contemplated warning, a very enticing example is held out by this punishment;" and yet this writer still says, (p. 667,) "let us try again, let us try any and every mode; any thing will prove better than that," &c.

Surely concessions like these go far towards supporting the principles I advocate. They are but fair admissions, and a fair example of the imbecility of human legislation.

With all the "wisdom of our ancestors," with ages of human legislation, with many years of carefully-preserved memorials of legislation in our own country, man is still

"unserved," and we are in an "unnatural and unnecessary state of things," our "brightest expectations" disappointed, and our "anticipated results completely reversed."

I feel no fear in making a very different application of these sentiments from what their more talented author would approve. Truth is my object, and I ask, if human governments have had such a long trial, and have so completely failed, why will not man try the *government of God*? If man is still unserved, after so many human means have been tried, why resort to another human expedient, and prescribe joint-stock companies as a remedy? Why not at once disclaim the maxims and aims of the world, and unite with that "holy nation, that royal priesthood, that peculiar people," the household of faith; and lead others, by our good works, in like manner to obey and glorify our Father who is in heaven? Why should we be called upon to try any and every other mode of human legislation, when by bitter experience of the past, we know our brightest expectations have been disappointed, and *when we have in the records of Divine Revelation a system of discipline formed by Infinite Wisdom, and graciously held out for the acceptance of all mankind?*

What should we think of the man who after trying many of the vices and pleasures of the world, and finding their end was disappointment and misery, should seek out some other vice from which to expect a happier result?

As well might he do this as to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements of worldly legislation, when experience has exposed their utter futility.

That the exertions of men may *sometimes appear* to be crowned with success, does by no means invalidate the positions I have advanced or the conclusions I may have drawn: such results by no means shew that they were de-

pendant on the human exertions made,—much less do they shew that the members of a kingdom distinct from this world should have taken part in them. Have not the exertions of all parties succeeded in turns? Have not barbarism and civilization, prosperity and desolation, alternately reigned over the kingdoms of the world?

By whose design, then, and by whose power were these changes produced? Vain man, to suppose your little plans, your little arrangements, your petty anger towards this party, and your childish enthusiasm for another, have been the means of effecting these revolutions in the world! “It is He who sitteth in the heavens, and beholdeth the inhabitants of the earth as grasshoppers, who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, and before whom all nations are but as a drop from the bucket, who turneth man to destruction, and saith, Return, ye children of men.”

Each instrument of God has its proper sphere of action, and we may rest assured, that whatever end the Divine mind proposes, it will find agents to effect. Why, then, should those who are separated, and called to a special work of mutual improvement and edification, forsake their *prescribed duties* for the purpose of effecting some unknown good in the world? As well might we expect Moses and Elias, and other messengers of heaven, to forsake their holy mission to assist on earth in the same object.

No; “order is heaven’s first law,” and the duty of the follower of Jesus is to make that law, as developed by Divine Revelation, his study and his guide, assured that if God be for him none can succeed against him, but that all *unauthorized* human exertions are futile and vain.

MAN UNFIT TO GOVERN MAN.

We cannot be surprised at the impossibility of serving God and Mammon, and at the inefficiency of man's government to effect even his own objects, when we think for one moment of the weakness and follies of men. Had I, in my examination of this subject, discovered that human legislation was sanctioned and encouraged by Divine Revelation, and that the followers of Jesus had been called upon to aid and abet it, I should have placed such a fact among the strongest of arguments against Divine Revelation itself. But such is not the case, but on the contrary, we find a prominent fact in the dealings of God with his people, (grounded, no doubt, on the unfitness of man for legislation,) that God never left his people to make laws for themselves.

When we look to the nature of the beings who have been making laws for us, we need feel no surprise that man is yet "unserved." The only wonder is, that any individuals should be found still willing and anxious to set up such an imperfect and dangerous authority, as man over his fellow-man.

Whatever view we take of this subject, we feel our position confirmed: whether we look to the object of our present existence, or whether we look merely to the nature of man—we are struck with the unfitness of one man, or many men holding dominion over, and ruling the destiny of, others.

Civil government would be consistent only with the assumption, that our present existence is our all and only important consideration, and that some men are capable of knowing for others what is best for that existence.

But when we turn to the simple fact, that the present is only a course of individual preparation under God for a

better and an eternal life, and that Revelation alone can point out the means ; when we turn to the weakness, the ignorance, the caprice, the injustice of men, we see at once the unfitness of man to govern man. That civil governments are permitted by God, that they may be under his comprehensive government necessary, (a necessary evil,) I am ready to allow ; that some modes of human legislation, and that some human legislators are less objectionable (as far as our finite judgments go) than others, I am willing to concede ; (though even the best may, according to the experience of the past, be only another mode of making way for a counter revolution ;) but all these things by no means shew the propriety of a Christian prolonging and supporting such an evil, nor of choosing the *probable best* of *two bad* modes, *when a third is held out to his acceptance and support—pure, perfect, and holy, and separate from all others.*

How often has the dominion of man blasted the fair tree of knowledge, virtue, and religion ! Our fathers where are they ? Our martyrs, our prophets, and apostles ? What system was it stepped in between God and his creatures, and cut off the blessed messengers of his love to mankind ? Was it not the government of this world ? What was it that laid unholy hands on our Lord and Master himself, and robbed him of that life which his God and Father had graciously bestowed ; was it not the “ prince of this world,” weak, erring, wicked, unauthorized human authority ? Then where shall the man be found to say, that man is fit to govern man ? If truth has been impeded in every age, in every clime by the blasting legislations of man,—if the most innocent and holiest of men have been murdered, and taken from this world of useful service and preparation, by the unauthorized dominion of men over their fellow-creatures, what

greater proof need we of the unfitness of man to govern man ?

When I contemplate the evil done by this unjust authority, when I look to the fact that God never left his people to make laws for themselves, and when I add to these two considerations the utter variance there is between His governments and the nature of human governments, His principles and the duties he has required, and the principles and duties of civil policy, I need but little more (though much more can be brought) to enforce the object of this address.

A "Jew judge" is no more "unfitted to sit in judgment on a Carile for blasphemy," than is any other man unfitted to lord his will or enforce his laws over my conscience or my actions. God only is wise enough to direct the steps of his creatures.

But perhaps it will be said; there must be laws of some kind, and that if we were to have only the laws of the church of God they must be enforced and obeyed, and this must be done by man. Most certainly ; but it must be clear to the most unthinking, that the *making* of laws, and the *administering* of them when made, are two distinct things. Man may be incapable of making a suitable law, but he may be quite competent to obey or administer it when made. Man from his ignorance of circumstances, from his ignorance of the moral and natural operations of the world, and from his ignorance of the Divine intentions, may be, and is, altogether unfitted to put forth his will as the rule for millions of his fellow-creatures ; but when an all-wise God has given him a law, he may rest satisfied with its suitability, and may administer it with safety, agreeably to the directions given.

But why need I dwell on the unfitness of man to govern man, when human legislators themselves raise the cry one

against the other? Not merely have politicians, in every age and clime, hurled kings from their thrones as unfit to hold dominion,—not merely do ministers who are *out* condemn all those who are *in* as unfit to hold the reins of Government; but one half of a legislature we often find in opposition to the other, each and both agreeing with me, that the other is unfit to govern man. It would appear by a close examination, therefore, that all men think all unfitted but themselves. Let me not, then, be deemed presumptuous in thus disqualifying men for so important a situation,—mine is comparatively a humble position, for I include myself also. Is it not strange, that while it is contended that man is capable and fitted to hold the *rule* over his fellow-creatures, that it should also be contended and acted upon, that the great majority are unfitted and incapable of even choosing their governors? Out of the many millions living under British rule, how is it that so few only should be considered competent even to elect their rulers? Who, then, even on political grounds, decides this boasted fitness either in the elector or elected? Is it not *the few* judging in their own case, and lifting up themselves as the alone qualified,—the few who with their own criterion of fitness represent themselves alone?

While they, then, condemn the many as unworthy and unfitted to have even a part or lot in the matter, let them not think me severe in including them in the same mass.

Unlike them, I do not condemn others and recommend myself. I say *all men are unfit*, and I hold up the majesty of heaven and earth, I point to the laws of our Creator and Preserver, and I say that his laws, and his only, are fitted to effect the enlightenment and happiness of his creatures. I turn you from an earthly to a heavenly Ruler, from imperfect man to an all-wise God, from human tribunals to the Judge of the whole earth.

Let me again not be misunderstood ; I do not say men of the world should not legislate one for another ; some laws are necessary, and those who do not know, or will not have, the laws of God, must make laws for themselves ; and while such a state of things exists, it is the duty of the Christian to *submit* and “*to obey*,” but not to take a part in, encourage, or prolong, it.

FROM THE CONDUCT OF JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES.

If a participation in worldly legislation be a duty so important as some think it to be, we might expect to find some encouragement and example given in the life of Jesus, or his apostles, or the first members of the church. If we found them interfering in political matters, we might think proper to imitate them. If we found in their lives nothing bearing on the subject, we should then be left to other sources on which to reason ; but if we find not only the absence of any thing for an union with civil governors, but some things against such union, surely such a coincidence with the other facts already stated in this address, must have considerable weight on this subject.

Let it not be said in the outset, that Jesus is no example to us on this subject ; as pre-eminently a virtuous and a holy man, who at all times did the will of his heavenly Father, he becomes an example to us in every moral, social, and religious duty of life ; and if in this important instance he is not so, it becomes the advocates of such an opinion to point out the grounds of the exception. Jesus in no one instance places himself on unequal grounds with his followers, as it regards his relation with the world ; he no where claimed an exemption from those obligations to civil governments, under which he and his followers were alike equally placed.

Of his disciples he expressly said, “They are not of the

world, even as I am not of the world," and he joined equally with them in their civil obligation of rendering unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. Jesus, then, I hold as an example, and we may be assured that he went the full length which principle would admit of interference in political matters; for, to suppose he would stop short or wholly withdraw from what would be really a public virtue or a national and almost universal good, is a reflection on his character I am not disposed to entertain.

When, then, we find Jesus *refusing* to take any part in human government, what can we conclude but that such part is not the duty of the religious man? One of the most prominent circumstances in his life was such a refusal. Where, in the page of history, do we find an instance of a man of public spirit, of talent, of health, and of every requisite capacity, refusing the proffered honours, authority, and power of worldly dominion? Yet such a man was Jesus and such his refusal. "For when he perceived that they would make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." Where is the man who will dare to suggest that this refusal arose from mere disinclination, from mere indifference to honour and glory, or from indolence and disregard to the good of his own nation, or even of all the nations of the earth?

Can we look for any other or any better reason than the one given by himself on an after occasion, "My kingdom is not of this world"?

Who can say that this reason is not sufficient? Who can fail to see that the kingdom of which Jesus is the head, was in its nature and duties so incompatible with worldly kingdoms, that he could not have given his support to both?

Jesus then refused on principle; he did not refuse on any peculiar circumstances of his own, but on the plain broad principle, "My kingdom is not of this world;"

and this same principle he expressly extended to his disciples also, for he said, "Otherwise, my servants would fight, but now is our kingdom (or my kingdom) not from hence."

In the whole life of Jesus, much as he did for the good of mankind, we do not find *an instance* in which, though surrounded with the temptations of temporal power and ambition, that ever he forsook the humble course of religious duty, to tamper with such an unauthorized usurpation. Alas, for many whose principles would equally have forbidden them, but whose weak ambition and erring judgment have led them from the straight and narrow path of religious duty into the broad political road of destruction!

Happily for our beloved Master his mind had been prepared to encounter this worldly allurements at the commencement of his ministry. In the depth of solitude he gave himself up to forty days' temptation (trial) and reflection; he saw human legislation, human power, and human greatness on the one hand, and the eternal glories of the heavenly kingdom on the other. He saw one was held out for his acceptance by the "Prince of this world," while the other rested upon the promise of his God, and he exclaimed once and for all, "I will worship the Lord my God, and him only will I serve." By this resolve we find him acting throughout the whole of his life: his meat and his drink was to do the will of his Heavenly Father, and to set an example to all those who, like him, should come out from the world, and become sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

It may be said by the friends of political interference, "How much good we may do by lending a hand to civil governments, and incorporating some of our enlightened principles with their maxims and practices!" It may be said, "How many opportunities of doing good you neglect

by keeping out of political matters!" Let not such delusion mislead the followers of Christ. Let us be content to do good as he did, by doing the will of our Heavenly Father. If it is supposed I can do good as a Christian by taking on me civil authority, and if this human probability converts the doing so into a duty, why was it not thought so by my Lord and Master? Surely if I can do good as a magistrate, he *might have done much more so as a king.*

Indeed, if civil authority had been consistent with his principles as a servant of God, the kingly office would have opened to him the way, and have given him the power of accomplishing wonders in the social and political state of society. Had it been the intention of God to effect the political regeneration of man by his people becoming (in the present state) the immediate instruments, is it likely that such an opportunity would have been lost? Here was a time when Jesus might (as politicians think) have done good by wholesale; here was a time when he might have given an example to after-ages how and in what manner his humble followers should act the king over their brethren. But, no; principle was against it, and all the human temptations and specious calculations of doing good, weighed nothing with Jesus in comparison with obedience to his God. If Jesus, then, would take no part in the governments of this world, why should his faithful followers?

That the course Jesus pursued in such refusal was right, is borne out not only by the general declaration that he "in all things pleased his Heavenly Father," but also by the plain fact that God himself called Jesus from this world, and said, "Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This one plain and important fact speaks volumes on the subject of political interference. Can the kingdoms of this world, brethren,

be in better hands than the hands of God? Can we, the followers of Jesus, think of interfering when even our Master takes no part therein, but has committed all into the hands of his Father? We live under the government of God, under that peculiar age when God governs the whole world by himself, when there are no special intermediate agents of his power, but when, for great and glorious purposes, he is by various means, and in various ways, performing his pleasure in the heavens above, and among the inhabitants of the earth beneath. Let not man suppose that God will not choose proper instruments for his all-wise purposes. He maketh messengers, winds; and his ministers a flame of fire—the whirlwind and the storm, the pestilence that walketh by noon-day, tyrants and slaves, revolutions and oppressions, are all the ministers of his purposes, and let man beware lest by his unauthorized interference they should become to him the ministers of vengeance! As a member of the church of God, man has his own path of duty marked out for him; in that path let him advance, round that course let him revolve. The planets may as well deviate from their orbits, as he from his path of duty: he may think himself eclipsed for a time by the passing institutions of the world, but his progress will be marked by increasing light, which will “shine more and more into perfect day.”

Let us, then, for encouragement and guidance, keep an eye on Jesus and the apostles, and we repeat that not one instance can be found of their having ever interfered in political matters. On the contrary, if we look to the character of the apostles and their situation in life, shall we not be led to anticipate that there was no intention of purifying or correcting, much less of supporting and prolonging, the governments of the world by their immediate agency? Does not the fact of twelve *illiterate, humble*, individuals having been chosen to the work of the Gospel,

shew that that ministry was not connected with worldly ambition, authority, or power? Does not the fact, that not many mighty, not many noble, were called, but that God had chosen the poor and weak in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of his heavenly kingdom, carry with it the conviction, that political power or political exertions were not the objects to which they were invited? So far from having their minds directed to such an object, they were led into a direct contrary course. "Fear not him that can destroy only the body;" "they will draw you before kings and rulers for my name's sake;" and, "if they persecute me they will persecute you," were the exhortations and admonitions with which they entered on their labours; and the very feeling of their soul, as afterwards expressed in tribulation, was, "We ought to obey God rather than man," for, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

And here let me venture to assert, that the very spirit and genius of Christianity is in itself opposed to political power and authority: and, strange as it may appear to some, I would bring the very commands of Scripture to obey magistrates, and to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, to support the view which I have taken. For, let me ask, if there had been nothing in Christianity likely to lead to a resistance to human authority, from whence arose the precaution of enforcing submission? If the converts to Christianity had been likely themselves to become magistrates or to sustain political offices, would an obedience to such offices have needed any command? Does the Attorney-General require any command to think favourably of the situation of Lord Chief Justice? Does the Duke of Wellington require any admonition to view the office of Premier with respect? Or does the Duke of Cumberland require any law to compel him to support

Kingly power? Do, in short, any aspirants to office need any command to support the interest or authority of that office?

Then why should it have been necessary to enforce on the minds of the apostles and disciples of Jesus a respect for, and submission to, kings and magistrates? Why, but for the plain reasons, that the religion they held precluded them from such places, and was, in its general nature and objects, repugnant thereto—but that, for prudential reasons, best known to the Great Lawgiver, a respect thus far was to be paid?

This, certainly, is the mode of reasoning we should pursue in other cases. Suppose, for instance, Mr. Joseph Hume was sent by an enlightened government on a mission to Lisbon, and strong injunctions were given him not to upbraid or resist Miguel and his authorities, should we say that this looked as if there was a disposition in Mr. Hume to think and feel favourably of the usurper? Or, should we not rather conclude that the nature of his mission and his own inclinations were to oppose the monster, and that, therefore, the injunctions were prudent and necessary? Undoubtedly we should. Now add to this, the supposition that the government from whom Mr. Hume was sent was a mild, liberal, and just government, and the government of Miguel was cruel, savage, and despotic, and that we could find no one instance in which Mr. Hume's government had ever assisted or supported the authority of Miguel; should we not justly conclude that it was not the intention of the English government to authorize Mr. Hume to support the government of Portugal by the commands given him, (not to resist, but) merely to submit to and obey the authorities there established, during his abode in that country? Let us further illustrate this argument by another allusion. It is an established maxim with the commanding officers of the soldiers of all the

civilized countries of Europe, that, whenever they are quartered in a foreign land, to enforce obedience on the part of their men to all the civil and religious laws and ceremonies of the country they are in. No man can rationally conclude that such *obedience and submission* to the local customs amount to a direction to *usurp the authority*, or even to adopt it.

Then let us apply the same mode of reasoning to our present subject, and we shall feel a conviction that our duties of obedience to the established authorities under which we may chance to live in this world, must never be urged as a command to fill the political situations and exercise the jurisdictions we are enjoined to *obey*.

But, to return to the apostles and primitive Christians; it is clear if I err in my withdrawal from all civil interference, that I do so in good company, and I feel willing to stand or fall with Jesus, the apostles, and first Christians; and I again ask, is it not a confirmation that there is something in the religion of Jesus, when rightly understood, repugnant to political interference, when we can find in the lives of these first great exemplars many things against, and not one instance in favour of, such interference?

Let me call on the professed followers of Jesus in this age, to think of these things; let me rouse them, at least, to a suspicion that there is something more in this subject than has ever yet been developed, and which yet may not be clearly understood. If more facts be necessary to this purpose, (under our present head,) let us turn for one minute to that great political event under which the primitive believers lived, the destruction of Jerusalem. We have not many political circumstances recorded in the scripture history, in which to see the course which the first Christians were instructed to take and did pursue; but if in those that are recorded we still find that

non-interference was both enjoined and pursued, is it not a most remarkable coincidence with the other facts and arguments adduced; and can we in justice say, that all this agreement is the result of mere accident, and not at once honestly acknowledge that the religion of Jesus and the example of himself and followers give no sanction to political interference?

The destruction of Jerusalem is the fairest and most striking event to which we can refer; it perhaps may be received as a complete test by which to try the genuineness of my hypothesis both in principle and practice. It was an event not confined to the peculiar situation or official duties of Jesus or his apostles; it was not limited to either a Jew or a Gentile, bond or free; but it comprehends a general principle, and holds up the whole of the primitive Christians as an illustration. And what do we learn from this event? Do we learn that it is the duty of the Christian to make political aggressions, or to exercise human power and domination? Do we learn from it the propriety of reforming, adjusting, and strengthening such authority? Do we learn to unite in the exercise of such authority? Nay, does it countenance political resistance to even foreign aggression? No! no such thing; but, on the contrary, (and in agreement with the genius of Christianity,) the primitive Christians were commanded to unite in no temporal measures of defence, to set about no political means of combat, but to flee forthwith to the mountains. "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet standing where it ought not, let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains."

I think I hear the mere politician, with a heart burning with party spirit or with more noble and generous feelings, exclaim, What cowardice! what meanness! Flee to the mountains? Fly from dangers and difficulties?

What! leave the city, the holy city, to destruction, when assistance was most needed? Leave their fellow-countrymen, fellow-subjects, and even their own families, to violence and death, rather than aid even by advice and counsel the efforts of men? Yes! so spake the voice of God, and so it speaks to all the followers of Jesus in every age and in every clime. "Touch not, taste not, handle not. Come out and be separate, and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." "For the weapons of your warfare are not worldly, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and Satan, principalities and powers." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." Ephes. vi. 13—17.

Here are the weapons, here are the means, and here alone, that the disciple is authorized to use for his own defence, or in effecting the improvement and happiness of his fellow-creatures. And so understood these primitive Christians. Their city was besieged; they obeyed the wise and gracious commands of God; all who believed in Jesus fled, and received safety and succour under the guardian wings of Almighty Power. Are these men to be branded as cowards? Did they fly from the strife of tongues, or the din of rapine and murder, from "selfish indolence"? No; they acted in obedience to Heaven. These were the men who took up their cross and followed Christ through evil and through good report, who with

firm purpose of soul, and a holy confidence in God, could meet death itself with hope and resignation. These are the souls of them that were beheaded for the witnesses of Jesus, and for the word of God, which had not worshiped the beast, (temporal authority,) neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands, and they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore shall they be before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

With such examples, then, let us be satisfied. The servant is not greater than his lord; and if our Master and such his followers were exposed to false accusations because they did not act with men, but were "*fellow-workers together with God*," let us be content to bear with the misunderstandings and sarcasms of those who see not as we see, but let us obey the invitation of God, and, like the apostles and primitive Christians, "come out from among them, and be not partakers of their sins."

It may be said in answer, that this event was one particularly pointed out by prophecy, and as concerning which particular directions were given; but let it be borne in mind; that the directions are not given as *exceptions*, and that the fact of its being *foretold* by no means affects the nature of the event under the Divine government; for whether things be foretold or not, "*known* unto God are all things from the beginning of the world."

The only question that can possibly arise out of this argument is, why were such express prohibitions given in this instance, not to use worldly power or resistance?

The answer is obvious, and tends to strengthen the view which we have taken—Because a great portion of these disciples were converted *Jews*. Judaism inculcated warfare and resistance in defence of their own peculiar country, and as the death-blow to the Mosaic institution had not yet finished its object, (though the veil of the temple was rent, the holy fire was not yet extinguished nor the building destroyed,) it was necessary that the principles in this particular of the forthcoming dispensation, should be impressed with a plain command and a specific order. The Jews would have had not only the feelings and spirits of men rousing them to self-defence and retaliation, but those feelings and spirits would have been warmed and urged on by the religion of their fathers, had not the principles of Christianity been in the most clear and explicit manner impressed upon them by a plain direction or prohibition.

I need not repeat, therefore, that these peculiarities are all on the side of our position, for they only shew, that so imperative is the principle of political non-interference on the disciple of Jesus, that even the Jew (who was not yet weaned from his other ceremonies) was laid under a specific obligation thereto. “My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight.” This is the principle that guided the primitive converts, without exception, throughout Scripture history.

I am anxious to do justice to truth; let me, therefore, before closing this part of our subject, refer to one or two *supposed* exceptions, and I believe the only ones ever brought in favour of political interference.

It is said that Paul pleaded his Roman citizenship as a protection against punishment, and that he appealed to Cæsar. (Acts xvi. 22, 25.) By what mode of reasoning this conduct of Paul is brought in support of be-

lievers taking a part in human legislation or in favour of political power, I cannot imagine. What is the fact that is thus unnaturally forced into the argument? Why, Paul (who was a Roman) offended some soothsayers at Philippi by his preaching; they brought him before civil rulers (magistrates), and these magistrates commanded the multitude and jailors to beat and imprison Paul. God interfered, opened the prison doors, and thus frightened the magistrates. They therefore send the serjeant to "let these men go;" but Paul says, "They have cast us into prison; now let them come themselves and fetch us out." These magistrates *obeyed Paul*, and they came to him and "besought him to depart." Now, how this case can be tortured into any thing favourable to a believer assisting and supporting magisterial authority, I know not. So if we turn to the other instance, what do we find? Why, that when Paul was about to be scourged, he asked "the centurion who stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman? and they were afraid when they heard that he was a Roman." Paul here only asks a simple question, grounded on a simple fact. He knew he was born a Roman, and merely wished to know whether the law which his prosecutor recognized, authorized him to punish a Roman. Here was no political interference; here was no resistance to the law under which he lived; here was no setting about an *alteration or a reform of that law*, but a simple question as to what the law was, and a willingness, as he at all times shewed, of *submitting* to it. "They neither found me in the temple, (said he,) disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, (as politicians do,) neither in the synagogue, nor in the city." Would a Frenchman at Lisbon, saying to the authorities of Miguel, Do you incarcerate a Frenchman? be construed into an approval of, or a willingness

to support, the tyranny of the Portuguese despot? Then why force the simple question of Paul into such an unjust conclusion?

Now, as to his appealing to Cæsar, (chap. xxv.,) what is it? One would be ready to suppose, when this is brought in argument, that Paul had been applying to Cæsar for some official situation grounded on his rights, or that he had been disputing the justice or policy of the criminal code of the Philippians, or some such-like meddling with their civil matters; but when we turn to the case, we find he answers for himself, "Neither against the laws of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended any thing at all; for if I am an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of *these things* (no political matter) whereof ye accuse me, I (with confidence) appeal unto Cæsar." I feel it necessary only to ask, whether this appeal of Paul can really be seriously brought to favour any support being given by believers to human governments? His very defence is, that he had taken *no political course*, he had interfered with none of their laws and customs, but had only, according to the dictates of his conscience, worshiped the God of his fathers, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets, and making those things the rule of his faith and practice.

If a poor suffering patriot Pole, living under the laws of the Russian despot, should, when about to suffer a punishment which even those laws did not sanction, urge its illegality and should appeal to the emperor, who would ever conclude that such an appeal was tantamount to an approval of Russian power, or that it shewed a disposition in the Pole to support the cursed authority under which he suffered? Who is there in the present day contends that Mr. O'Connell is favourable to and is

anxious to prolong English rule in Ireland, merely because he steers clear of legal offence, and appeals to constitutional power against illegal force? Then why make Paul either by direct assertion or insinuation a supporter of Roman power, because he appealed to it for protection against still more brutal force?

But, independently of Paul's declaration that he had taken no political part, how can we suppose that he who had foretold the approaching ruin of the Roman empire and the destruction of its power, should be found lending any assistance to its existence and authority? He only exercised a right, a right which it would be proper to exercise even towards the chieftain of a band of robbers, viz. a right to acquittal by one of their own laws.

TEXTUAL OBJECTIONS.

Having already shewn that the object and design of Revelation, the nature of Christianity, and the conduct of Jesus and his apostles, are all incompatible with political pursuits, it appears hardly necessary to turn to textual argument: I shall, therefore, merely refer to a few passages, accompanied with very brief remarks, and those confined to our present subject, even where a full understanding of such passages might require many other observations.

But let us, at the commencement, do justice to one remarkable fact, namely, the *total absence* of any passages to inculcate political interference. From whence, as I have asked before, arise these astounding facts, these remarkable coincidences, that in every view we take there should be such a complete absence of any thing *for*, while whatever is said or done should be *against* the practice of political Christians! How is it that among the moral and social duties there should not even be a

hint at political virtues; that among the most minute directions for our religious, social, and domestic guidance, not one allusion is made to our political dangers and difficulties? Is a political life so easy, so unimportant, and so free from dangers, as to have been thought unworthy of notice by our inspired teachers? Will any one contend, that this is the reason why the Scriptures have withheld any countenance to such practices, rather than honestly acknowledge that no directions or encouragement could be given to a course which is *in itself wrong to pursue*?

Where is the father who has a son about to enter on what is called public life, but feels the necessity of laying down, for the benefit of that son, some principles and rules for his guidance, and who beforehand has not trained and educated him in a way fitted for his future career?

And shall we suppose that our great teachers from heaven would have omitted a thing of such importance had they intended that the believers should ever enter on such a course of life? Would the wise, learned, and parental Paul have neglected such instruction in his education of his beloved son Timothy; or, indeed, of those numerous children whom he "begot through the gospel," had he ever intended they should become politicians? Is the simple direction, "Fear God and honour the king," political education enough for either a Tory, Whig, or Radical?

If the office of a human legislator be one proper for the disciple of Jesus to maintain, and had it been contemplated by Jesus and his apostles, I doubt not but we should have had some general and correct principles laid down for him to pursue, and certain evils, errors, and dangers held up for him to avoid; for the Son of Man is as a man travelling into a far country, giving talents and

employments to his servants, and saying, "Occupy till I come." The total absence of any political work enjoined ought to be sufficient for the servant of Jesus not to set about such an unauthorized undertaking. As, then; we can find no part of Scripture in favour, let us turn to a few passages which, if they have any bearing on our subject, are decidedly adverse to the believer assuming civil authority.

Matt. xx. 25—28. The spirit, object, and language of these passages are clearly to our point. The mother of Zebedee's children asks of Jesus some temporal distinctions for her two sons, James and John (see ver. 21); the jealousy and indignation of the other disciples were roused at this desired superiority, either because they considered this elevation of one above the others would be destructive of that equality which was to exist among the disciples, or because they considered themselves equally entitled to the situation: whichever it was, the answer of Jesus clearly shews that, though in his future kingdom there would be different places provided by his Father for the faithful, yet that in this world there was to be no usurpation of superiority, power, or political distinctions. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over their people, and they that are great" (such as magistrates) "also exercise authority over them. *But it shall not be so among you* : but whosoever would be chief," (of most use and importance among you,) "it must be only by being most the servant of all; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Here Jesus keeps up the relationship, the similarity in the nature of his duties and those of his followers; as he came to minister, not to be ministered unto, such also was the duty of his disciples. As he would not receive or exercise worldly authority, because his kingdom was not of this world, so

also was it *imperative* on his followers to observe the like principle. The great of the earth exercise authority, *but it shall not be so among you.*

Let not the young and noble-minded follower of Jesus despond with the thought that his course is ever to be one of abasement and submission. No, let him follow up with joy the language with which Jesus carries out his prohibition in this age of temporal distinctions: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom," (which is to come,) "as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here Jesus points back to his own trials, to his own glorious triumph over the temptations which worldly authority and political ambition had placed before him, when all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, were offered for his acceptance; but when he spurned them, and as a reward received the appointment of his Father to a spiritual kingdom; and he promises his disciples that they also (if they renounce worldly distinctions) shall also be in like manner rewarded hereafter.

Matt. xiii. 24. In this parable we have a principle for our guidance, striking at the very root of political power. The parable is grounded on the very anticipation of the meddling hand of human power and persecution. The parable imagines the existence of bad men in the world, and that the advocates for truth and virtæ will be for using human means to put the bad men down. But Jesus forbids the exercise of such dangerous measures; and, with that pithiness of argument which marks all his reasoning, shews them their inability and unfitness for such an undertaking. "*Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.*" He knew that man was unfit to govern man. He strikes at the very root of

the evils of human government—he shews that man, by his legal authority, could not do political good without effecting moral evil—and in direct opposition to the conduct of Sir Robert Peel, he would sooner leave the political good undone than be found guilty of the moral evil; but though the conduct of Jesus was different from that of the honourable Baronet, his reasoning was so completely in unison, that I am tempted again to state the reasoning of the latter, and leave others to judge whether consistency of conduct be on the side of the humble Jesus, or of the great statesman Sir Robert Peel.

“If the question is to be considered not as a question regarding the policy of instituting prosecutions (rooting up tares and wheat together) in such cases, but a question regarding the *moral justice* of visiting the offences with punishment, he doubted whether it would be *possible long to maintain the existence of government under the practical execution of such principles.*”

Sir R. Peel and all politicians, then, are for maintaining the existence of government at the risk of hurting the wheat with the tares. Let the conduct of Jesus, on the contrary, suffice for his followers.

Let it not be said that the tares and wheat merely allude to different *opinions* which exist, and for which liberty of conscience is to be given. Jesus goes upon no such indefinite grounds; he alludes to nothing so vague as mere *opinions*; he terms one thing *wheat* and the other *tares*, and expressly states that in the end of the world the one shall be burnt.

Let it not be said that it refers to wicked *principles* merely. Jesus explains his own parable, and expressly states that the wheat are *persons*, “the children of the kingdom;” and the tares *persons*, “the children of vice.”

Let it not be said that it merely alludes to bad men in *the church*, and that the parable is to shew that civil

power is not to be used in *religious societies*. (Why will men shut their eyes to truth upon this subject?) Does not Jesus plainly say that the field is the *whole world*? Then what can the parable import but plainly this, that the disciples of Jesus are to adopt no worldly measures, no human discipline, no civil governments towards the people of the world? For the better understanding of this principle, and for seeing its excellency, let us turn to a similar case with the one on which Sir R. Peel animadverted. A man is cast into prison or executed; this man is thought to be a bad man, a tare himself, but he has a wife and a family, who are religious characters, exemplary for their virtues and piety, who indeed are such wheat as is spoken of by Jesus. What is the consequence to such a family, when the protection, guidance, and industry of the father and the husband are taken for ever from it, and the children left to starvation, and the wife to sorrow and death; what is this but rooting up the wheat with the tares? And when we consider further in how many cases of human punishment the wheat is taken *instead* of the tares, the innocent instead of the guilty, what disciple of Jesus will not pause and exclaim, I will have no hand in these matters? But, my friends, civil governments cannot be carried on under the practical execution of such moral and religious principles! Will ye not then agree with me, that believers should lend no aid to such governments? For if we do evil that good may come, our damnation is just; our principle should be, "Let both grow together unto the harvest."

1 Cor. v. 12. Paul, in giving some directions relative to the discipline of the church of God, informs the members that they are not under obligation to keep *altogether* separate from the wicked of the world, otherwise they would not be able to live; they were to pursue their callings, therefore, and to get their living, and perform their

duties without troubling themselves about the characters of people of the world: "For what have we to judge them that are without the church? Do not we judge them that are within?"

Without any further comment, what can more clearly make out the distinctiveness which ought to characterize the follower of Jesus?

1 Cor. vi. 1—6. In these verses we have it clearly laid down, 1st, that human laws and human judges are unauthorized by God; 2d, that the laws of the church are the only laws that should be exercised and supported by members of the church; 3d, that the laws of man are unworthy of being used by them; and, 4th, that civil rulers can be but little esteemed (from the very nature of their principles) by the believer.

The Apostle calls the civil judges "unjust," viz. unauthorized judges. He calls upon the believer to exercise his own laws, which clearly shews that the church of God is an organized body, and needs no other government. Indeed, the whole direction goes on the assumed fact, that the constitution, government, and laws of the church of God are sufficient to the Christian for every purpose of life, for social rule and social order, and that the very nature of it is to keep its members separate from all earthly governments.

There are some societies of professing Christians who recognize some of these principles, but who stop short of a full and just application of them. Take the Quakers for instance. They do not go to law one with another; they do not use the laws of the "unjust" towards themselves; but what *do* they *do*? Why, they will take a part at elections in choosing these very unjust law-makers. They will choose men to make unjust laws for others, though they will not use the laws among themselves; nay, they will even become "unjust" law-makers

themselves, they will even unite with others to bind a burden on other men's shoulders, which they among themselves will not touch with so much as one of their fingers. Inconsistent men! blind guides! shall I call you Pharisees and hypocrites? I would to God that ye did it *ignorantly*, not seeing the truth. But how dare ye thus act? We have now, for the first time in the British Parliament, an instance of a Quaker, by profession, becoming a Member of the House of Commons, and sitting and voting in that assembly, and making laws for the guidance of my conduct. I will appeal personally to that "honourable" Member, the Quaker representative, the Member for South Durham, and I ask Joseph Pease, "By what authority doest thou these things, and who giveth thee this authority?" How dare you unite with men to bind laws on my shoulders, which laws you and your fellows will not exercise towards one another, and when you know and acknowledge that God has already given the only laws that should be executed by the followers of Jesus? "I speak to your shame, is it so, that there is not a wise and consistent man among ye?" I hope, for the honour of the body of whom you are a member, that they disapprove your course, and that we shall shortly hear the language of Paul applied to your case, "Demas has forsaken us, having loved this present world." (2 Tim. iv. 10.) "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." (2 Tim. ii. 4.) When we consider that neither Jesus, Paul, nor Timothy, nor the disciples, were engaged in political affairs, we very justly conclude that "the affairs of this life" here mentioned are of that nature. Indeed, what other affairs can possibly be intended? Paul could not refer to business or family affairs, for we know that in these things we have direct duties and express directions; and Paul himself not merely

enjoins on us "diligence in business," but sets us an example by working with his own hands. But, taken in reference to political engagements and entanglements, the language is both plain and beautiful, and in full accordance with all we have seen of divine revelation, and all we know of the dangers of the world. Well might Paul instruct Timothy to commit such precautions, with other important matters, to faithful men, that they might hand them down to others also. May *neighbour Pease* consider what I say, and the Lord give him understanding!

John xii. 31, xiv. 30, xvi. 11: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." In these passages our blessed Master personifies civil power and human domination by the term "prince of this world." It was by this accursed prince, this worldly judgment, that he was about to be tried, condemned, and executed; and for this grossest act of worldly folly and wickedness Jesus pronounces condemnation on human authority: "Now is the judgment of this world: now is the prince of this world cast out—for the prince of this world cometh and findeth nothing in me."

Well might Jesus pronounce condemnation on earthly tribunals, when they were about to manifest in such a signal manner their unholy judgment and their wicked power. We need not wonder, after this, that no one disciple of Jesus was ever found on the bench of human judicature, or in the ranks of human legislators or executioners. The prince of this world was to the followers of Jesus once and for ever *cast out*, and the faith and confidence of the believer was to stand, not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. "Howbeit," says the Apostle, "we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God, which none of the princes of this

world know; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Matt. v. This chapter contains many moral principles and precepts which are directly opposed to the principles on which civil governments are founded; indeed, it would be "impossible to maintain the existence of civil government under the practical execution of these principles." "Ye have heard it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, Resist not evil. Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you." We have already shewn, that these and many other similar moral duties cannot be preserved and acted upon under human legislation. Let it not be replied, that these are mere moral principles for individual conduct. What can possibly be meant by such a distinction? Does Jesus lay down one kind of morality for individuals, and another for nations or societies? Does he give one principle of morality to be acted upon in private, and quite a contrary one to be used in public? Impious insinuation! What dangerous consequences would such a view of the moral teaching of Jesus produce if consistently carried out! "Ye have heard it said of old time, Thou shalt not kill. But I say, whoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of judgment." What! does this direction have reference only to "individual conduct and private life"? So it is right, then, is it, for nations of men, or bands of murderers, to kill and to destroy? So,

"One murder makes a villain,
Thousands a hero"?

Is this the religion of Jesus?

"Ye have heard it said of old time, Thou shalt not

commit adultery: but I say, That whosoever looketh on a woman with improper desires, hath committed adultery already in his heart." So these moral principles are for individual conduct and private life only, are they? This is indeed a licence for all that public wickedness, in high places, with which history so fully abounds. Kings, magistrates, and communities, may wallow in adultery and murder, may curse their enemies and take eye for eye and tooth for tooth, because these teachings of Jesus are mere moral principles for individuals in private life. Good God! how will not men reason when blinded by the maxims of this world? Followers of Jesus, be not children in understanding. The principles and precepts of your Master must follow you into every circumstance in life, and when you see you cannot follow politics, and at the same time adhere to his doctrines, hesitate not, but follow *him* whithersoever he goeth, that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven. Politics may be necessary for the children of this world, and they may consistently pursue its maxims; but if *you* love them who love you only, what reward have you? do not even politicians (civil officers) the same? and if ye salute your brother only, what do ye more than people of the world; do not even they the same? "But be *ye* perfect."

But, furthermore, is it not strange that any should endeavour, not only to make a distinction about the general and individual application of these principles, but also to limit them to private or social life, when they are put by Jesus in juxta-position with the *judicial* system of Moses? Why then not acknowledge them to be like all the laws of Jesus, the rule for the Christian in every circumstance of life?

Civil governments cannot be carried on under the practical execution of such principles: with them an eye for an eye may be necessary; but your duty, as be-

lievers, is to "recompense to no man evil for evil," to avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; and "resist not evil, but overcome evil with good;" therefore you must have nothing to do with civil governments. The world may despise you for such a resolution; they may be unable to understand the pure and heavenly principles by which you are guided. Heed not their condemnation—look to your high calling of God in Christ Jesus. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God; therefore *the world knoweth us not*, because it knew him not."

"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds; for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for the lust of the eyes and the pride of life cometh not from the Father, but is of the world." "But pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep unspotted from the world." "For the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches and power, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

In these and many similar passages we learn how dangerous worldly pursuits are, and how inimical they are to the love of God and the service of Christ; here we learn, that the lust of the eyes and the pride of life—and what answers to these things so well as political, vain, ambitious pursuits, love of pre-eminence and rule?—is not of the Father, but of the world. Here we learn the nature of our duties: if we are anxious "to do good," or if this be our cry and our excuse, here we see in what manner it is to be performed; visit the fatherless and widows in affliction, and keep unspotted from the world. Here are no speculative modes of doing good; here is no aiming at uncertainty to do good by wholesale; here will be

no gross "humiliating failure of an aim," no "complete reverse of all anticipated results," no "bright expectations of public benefit met by blank disappointment." Here will be at last no vain boastings of "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many *wonderful works?*" but here is plain duty and a plain reward annexed,—inasmuch as ye did it to *one of the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me.* "Beware, then, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the *world*, and not after Christ."

Let us, friends, look forward with lively hopes, and let us prepare, by a constant study of the laws of God, for that glorious period, when all civil authority and power shall be banished from the earth, when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ." Revelations xi. 15.

BAD CONSEQUENCES.

I cannot forbear a few remarks on the lamentable consequences to the cause of religion by believers engaging in political pursuits.

Far be it from me to fear the consequences of any line of conduct, if it be a line marked out by duty, if it be a path trod by Jesus and sanctioned by his teachings; I would say, Follow it withersoever it may lead. But if a certain course of conduct is not thus sanctioned, nay, but on the contrary, opposed to the religion of Jesus, and all primitive example, evil consequences are not only what we might expect to find, but ought to be received with considerable weight in support of the position that the course from whence they arise should not be pursued. In short, I ask, whether they ought not to decide any doubt which might even hang over the principle itself? If you doubt whether the *existence and principles* of the

church of God and the example of Jesus exclude all union and interference with the kingdoms of the world, look to the consequences of such interference; and if those consequences are dangerous and bad, you must certainly remain unjustified in risking or promoting them in the absence of all authority and command.

We have shewn in this address that the church of God is an organized family, united for the great purposes of moral and spiritual improvement; that the ultimate object of such union is future happiness; that we live in this world for the purpose of preparing for a better, and that the means are the principles and laws of Jesus; that this is a work which requires our constant attention, constant watchfulness over one another, uniform kindness and assistance one towards another; constant attention to our own characters, states of mind, dispositions, affections, and passions, for without this we shall never be presented a pure and glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. We have said from scripture, that these things cannot be done by any one who "entangleth himself with the affairs of this life," and we will now point out a few particulars in which this is manifest. That politics are inimical to the performance of these moral and religious duties, that they are in themselves delusive and dangerous, we extract the following admission of politicians themselves.

In the Van Dieman's Land Almanack, which is circulated throughout this country under the authority and sanction of Lord Brougham and other distinguished statesmen, under "Advice to Emigrants," is the following article:

"Beware of becoming a politician, or of belonging to party; an Emigrant should leave all things of this sort in the country to which he has bid adieu. *He cannot afford to have his mind or his time divided between what his new avocations demand of him and such pursuits as these.* Let an Emigrant once take a greater interest in cobbling

the affairs of government than in cultivating his land, and it requires little of the spirit of prescience to foretell what will be his fate."

Now seriously, friends, is not this advice good? Now seriously, upon what principle is it founded? Is it not upon the plain fact, that *if politics are pursued, other things must be neglected*, and that, therefore, it is only those who are already well established and have gained a competency, that should dabble in politics? This is exactly the case. To politicians, and mere politicians, or members of the world, this advice is both consistent and good; but the correct principle on which it is founded, ought, by the followers of Jesus, to be carried out to a farther extent and directed to another point.

To a man of this world, a competency, a sufficiency of this world's goods, are his end and aim; till he has acquired these, he must not waste his time in "cobbling governments," instead of cultivating his land, or we know what the result will be: the first must from its nature engross so much of his time and attention, that the latter will be neglected. Does not this shew us, friends, how impossible it is for a Christian to pursue politics? He who has not merely a sufficiency of this world's good things to procure, who has not merely his land to till, but who has as imperative a duty, his mind and morals to cultivate, and the church to build up in its most holy faith; who if he follow in the steps of Paul, hath not only the labours of this life pressing on him, but that also which cometh "daily, the care of the churches," cannot, must not be a politician.

If the advice of the almanack be true in reference to young settlers in a country, how much more does it press on you who *never* intend to make this world your home, but who are only travellers and sojourners through it, as were all of your forefathers who were the called of God! They shewed, and you ought also to shew by your indif-

ference to the governments of this world, that you have here no continuing city, but that you seek one which is to come, whose builder and maker is God.

If you determine on a different course, depend upon it, it requires little of the spirit of prescience to foresee the consequences. That time which ought to be devoted to your moral and religious duties will be wasted on fruitless politics; that mind and body which ought to be sanctified and presented unto God a living sacrifice, will be immolated on the unholy altar of worldly ambition; those talents and principles which a gracious God has given you for the "edification of the church," will to them be buried in a napkin. Those precious pearls which ought to adorn your crown of righteousness, will be cast before swine and trodden under foot of men. Believers, look around you, and say whether you have not seen this to be the consequence of political pursuits? Have you not seen your brother in the gospel almost forsake you, "having loved the present world"? Have you not seen that, though he had no time for you, he had time for his brother politicians?—no time to examine with you those treasures of knowledge and virtue which are able to make wise unto salvation, but abundant time to concoct with the others some speculative measure of politics? Have you not seen him ever ready to lend an ear to the invitations of the world, but ever ready to say to you, "I will hear you again of this matter when I have a convenient season"? Have you not remarked his absence from your meetings, but his punctual attendance at the club-house, the common hall, or the city feast? Have you not remarked that he became ignorant of scripture, lukewarm in religion, and lax in morals, in exact proportion as he became acquainted with politics, hot in their defence, and constant in his pursuit of them? Have you not observed that his offering to the temple decreased in

proportion as his donations swelled the public purse ; that his private almsgiving ceased when he began to emblazon his name before man on the political subscription list ; in short, have you not had to lament that the cares and engagements of the world choked the word and it became at last unfruitful ?

Then why pursue politics ? The traveller to Zion has no time to stay and legislate for the country through which he hastens ; he must “ shew plainly, that he seeketh one that is to come, and press forward towards the mark for the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus.”

His moral and religious competency *will* require his whole life to effect ; he must not consider himself established till he sets foot on that tearless land where sorrow and sighing are to be heard no more ; he will have no time to cobble the affairs of government till he has performed the various obligations and duties which the Scriptures enjoin, and made his calling and election sure ; then, and not till then, can he say, “ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.”

But politics not only engross the time which ought to be devoted to religion, but how many of the common, necessary duties of life are neglected by the politician ! He who neglects to provide for his own household, the Scriptures tell us, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel ; and are not politics calculated to produce this evil ? Do we not know many instances in which the farm, the manufactory, or the shop, has been left too often for the county meeting, the common-hall, or the common smoking parlour of the political pot-house, till at last, poverty and beggary of the whole family was the consequence ? Are not the conjugal and parental duties invariably left behind in this wild and delusive pursuit ? If you are a politician, judge not in your own case. Go, ask the forsaken, disconsolate wife, she who spends

evening after evening by her lone fire-side, whether you have been to her what a husband ought to be? Do you bear for her, nay, even share with her, the many anxieties and vexations of domestic life; do you, after the maternal cares and toils of the day are over, cheer her evening hours with your presence, instruct her by your conversation, heighten her enjoyments by your participation, or lighten her sorrows by your brighter hopes or firmer courage? Can you read to her the language of Paul, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the word, and present it glorious—not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish"? Can you read this and say, *I am such a husband*; or must you not candidly confess that you cannot attend to these things, and pursue your politics besides? You know that so fascinating are your politics that they follow you wherever you go; you think, you talk, you dream of politics, and your own home is dull and irksome to you, because it is not illumined with the blaze of political excitement. The company and conversation of your wife only serve to prepare your eyes for slumber, because she can take no part in your favourite pursuit. Thus passes day after day till your minds, manners, tastes, and affections become estranged, and all the lamentable consequences of domestic discord ensue. Let me, on the contrary, call on you to forsake such a dangerous course. "Dwell with them according to knowledge, as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." It is your imperative duty as a disciple of Jesus.

It is not the wife alone who suffers from the worldly engagements of the husband. Look to the children of the politician. The Scriptures enforce on the believer to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of

the Lord, to train them in the way they should go, that when they are old they may not depart from it. "All these words which I command thee shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest with them by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Happy are the parents who have thus performed their duty; their children rise up and call them blessed, their God welcomes them to higher duties and higher honours, by "Come, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

The performance of these duties requires considerable time and uniform attention; but they are imperative on the faithful followers of Jesus, and are happily compensated by the delightful results. Believers who have not resolved to perform these duties ought not to enter into the marriage state; but if they have so resolved, they must cast away every sin, every care, every weight which will be likely to beset them, and pursue with patience these parental duties. Experience teaches us that there is no impediment to the discharge of these sacred obligations so great as the pursuit of politics. The children of the politician seldom receive from him the moral lesson of instruction; his conversation turns on other subjects. They have little opportunity of learning from his example, for his absence from home leaves him little with them. They do not see in their father's conduct how to apply the principles they hear, for they have seldom an opportunity of beholding his actions or of knowing the reasons for them; and when they do see and hear, the government of their tempers and the controul of their feelings are rather impeded than promoted by the excitement and party-spirit with which the father appears generally actuated. Thus the first few

years of their life, when every young feeling and thought ought to have received a proper direction, are left to be perverted by ignorant nurses and corrupt servants; and when reports reach the ear of the engaged parent that his children are quite unmanageable at home, they are sent off to complete their ruin at some public school, as the "most easy way of bringing them up." Frequently, indeed, is this the course; lamentable indeed are the consequences. Instances abound where fathers eminent for their talents, their public spirit, and public services, are brought with sorrow and poverty to the grave by the profligacy of their neglected and wicked children. Will you, then, in spite of your religion, in spite of the example of your Master and his apostles, risk these gloomy consequences merely to gratify your inclinations, your party-spirit, and your vanity?

Not merely is the family of the politician injured by his pursuits, but it is generally the case that his own mind and character suffer also. That man must be little acquainted with religion and society who disputes this fact, and ignorant of himself if he treats with defiance such a dangerous probability. "Let him who thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

"Thy honourable metal may be wrought
From that it is disposed; therefore 'tis meet
That noble minds keep with their likes;
For who so firm that cannot be seduced?" *

To the honour of Divine Revelation, its principles are in accordance with the most tried experience. For the safety of believers, therefore, it has enjoined on them a prudent separation from the world; and where is the man who has looked around him and not been conscious of the value of such an injunction?

Have you not seen your fellow-disciple, who was once

* Shakspeare.

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pure, humble, and separate from sinners, become loose in character, less regular in his conduct, more arrogant, self-willed, vain, and ambitious as he engaged in politics?

The female character is not more altered by public service or the stage than is the character of the believer by politics.

The frequent association with bad characters necessary to the politician, an union with their practices, a regulation of your sentiments and actions by what are thought to be their correct principles and maxims, must gradually affect your habit and state of mind, and (unconsciously to you) lead you from that only safe, moral and religious state where the eye is single, and the whole body full of light.

But the evil consequences of politics do not even stop here. The church of God itself is endangered by a brother politician. Let a man engage in matters of civil government, and you will soon find him introducing its spirit, its maxims, and its practices into the church of God. One week of active politics will be quite sufficient to mark in the Sunday meeting a change in the tone of mind, the manners and observations of your brother member. If he does not relinquish speaking altogether, his addresses are no longer marked by that serious simplicity which arose from a heart bent on the performance of a duty and anxious for the present and eternal welfare of his friends, but they seem formed only for the purpose of amusement, to display his own talent, or to irritate and wound some brother with whom he may chance to be at variance.

The government and discipline of the church suffer under his noxious influence. The business of the church is prosecuted with all the spirit of a political contest. Inequality of rank and condition are made to trample on equality of rights; political principles are introduced to

settle religious differences; forms and precedents, from courts of human judicature, are brought in to aid religious oppression and injustice; human authority is made to take place of divine law; and, at last, the plain and simple discipline of the New Testament is thought totally insufficient for the safety of the church. This is the natural process of politics in the church of God. The lamentable consequences may easily be foreseen if they have never been experienced.

Before closing this part of our subject, allow me to anticipate an objection that may be made to some things I have said. It may be said, that some of the consequences I have referred to do not appertain to *all* politicians, that some are capable of resisting the injuries which I have made consequent on political pursuits. I will allow that the consequences may vary in different individuals, and were I disposed to admit (which I am not) that some are *wholly* unaffected by them, it would by no means affect our argument, or justify even these infallible individuals in their unsanctioned course. It is a forbidden path, it is a dangerous path, and though you may chance to escape some of the worst evils that beset it, your example will lead others less wary than yourself, and to them it will become a path of destruction. The dispensation of Jesus (the constitution, government, and laws of the church of God) is offered to *all*, and is to guide all alike who receive it. A *perfect*, infallible *Jew* would not have been authorized, during the dispensation of Moses, in acting on even an enlightened system of gospel liberty; and what is not *now* given to your brothers under Jesus is not given unto you.

Again it may be said, that many of the consequences I have pointed out will follow only those who devote *much* of their time and attention to politics, and that a man may perform many of the common civil duties without

having his mind and affections thus engaged. Delusive reasoning! If politics are to be pursued, it is necessary that some should devote their time and their minds to it, and who is to decide whether this shall be you or I? Who is to tell one man that on him and his family are to fall all those bitter consequences before stated, while another is to go free? Such false reasoning and such partial practice is the foundation of all political evils and corruptions. It is this occasional dabbling in politics, and not giving the mind to it, this occasional performing "some of the duties" without having even learnt its theory, this leaving other people to learn, to think, to act for you, while you only lend your sanction, that has given to knavery all its opportunities, and to oppression all its power.

It is to you *half* politicians that we are indebted for the choice of law-makers whom you never knew, and for the support of measures you never gave yourselves the trouble to understand. It is to you who put your names to petitions you never read, and on subjects you never studied; you, who are ever ready to huzza your private friends, though they may be your country's foes; you, who have a ready vote for the first applicant or the highest bidder, who care not whether you send in a Waithman to-day or a Lyall to-morrow: it is to you we are indebted (if indebted at all) for the waste of our property and the slavery of our person. Think not, then, that you do your duties or effect your country's good by devoting a few hours of bribery or indolence to political matters. No; politics, if pursued, must be pursued with vigilance and faithfulness, and if there is any one principle of Jesus that applies to politics, it is this,—“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.” But, believers, remember, that for all these things you will be brought into judgment.

OBJECTIONS TO NON-INTERFERENCE CONSIDERED.

In replying in an abstract form to the arguments of those who advocate the right and duty of believers to interfere with civil governments, I shall be very brief, and must beg to refer to the general scope of this address, as affording the best reply, as in most cases a full and complete answer would require a repetition of many things already urged. My opponents may have arguments of which I am ignorant; but those with which I am acquainted are so specious and indefinite, that to reply to them fully would be both tedious and unnecessary.

In a sermon just put into my hands, entitled, *Christian Patriotism*, and preached by that bold and generally correct thinker, Mr. R. Aspland, of Hackney, I find the popular error so incorporated with general truths and with laudable feelings, that it is difficult to extract any passage without an admixture of right and wrong, or any argument, however just, but what is either based upon false premises, or brought to sustain an unjust conclusion.

The preacher treats of patriotism in its general acceptance, "a love of country."

He endeavours to shew that Jesus and Paul possessed this feeling. And seems to conclude, therefore, that such a sentiment is sanctioned and praiseworthy.

Now all this *might* be true, and yet the object for which it is brought be altogether false, viz. that we should therefore dabble in politics.

Patriotism, a love of country, may be natural, innocent, and even praiseworthy: this depends on circumstances. The only question with us is, How ought such love to be exercised and applied; whether according to the mere

impulse of our own feelings, or whether not rather in agreement with the laws of God.

That Jesus possessed a love of *his* country and of kindred none can doubt; but to conclude, therefore, that this sanctions a similar feeling in other cases, is unjust and contrary to fact, and still more so to conclude that we should manifest it differently.

Would this feeling and its supposed justified consequences have been right in an Abraham, or did *he* ever manifest the possession of it when called from the land of his fathers?

Was this feeling ever possessed or encouraged by a Moses towards the land of his nativity?

Did the Israelites, (I was about to ask,) who were brought out from their native land of Egypt, possess this love of country? But I recollect they *did* sigh for the flesh-pots of their native country, and I suppose, therefore, I must concede this as one of the instances of noble and generous patriotism.

Did Paul manifest this feeling? He was born a Roman in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia; but when and in what manner did he ever display this "first and strongest sentiment"?

That Jesus, as a Jew, should have exhibited a love of *his* country and *his* countrymen, is a case perfectly distinct from the argument. "From the necessity of the case, patriotism in our Lord assumed a religious character; Judaism was entirely a religion of country; obedience to God was patriotism; idolatry was high treason." Then, why should such facts be brought to bear upon cases totally different?

Men mistake themselves and mislead others when they apply terms to subjects with which they are not consistent. As well might we apply the word *chance* to the

Divine Government as to speak of patriotism in reference to religion.

According to Mr. Aspland's own admission, the patriotism which he ascribes to Jesus was a feeling of a "religious character;" "obedience to God" was his patriotism. This also was the patriotism of Paul, (and not a mere natural love of his native country,) and with such a patriotism I am willing to abide; and my question, therefore, returns, is an interference and support of human governments *an act of obedience to God?* If it be not, then such interference does not assume a religious character and is not the patriotism of Jesus.

Mr. A. turns to the language of Paul (Romans ix. 4, 5) with some degree of triumph, and says, "This picture of national pre-eminence, which none but a patriot would or could have drawn, was accompanied by a generous, self-devoting wish for his countrymen: 'I say the truth in Christ, my conscience bearing me witness that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish myself separated from the service of Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh.'"

Now, who were these brethren for whom Paul had this devoting wish, and on what was it grounded? Were they the Romans? for Paul was a Roman. Were they the Cilicians that he loved, and because they were Cilicians? No: it was the Israelites to whom pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came; these were the men and these the grounds on which he gave to them his self-devoting wish and his religious affections. It was not because they were his countrymen, for they were not; it was not because they were his kinsmen, but because they were beloved for their fathers' sake, and to whom pertained the adoption of Jehovah himself.

But suppose it had been even a feeling of patriotism in the sense to which Mr. A. would apply it; of what use did Paul make of it; how did he exercise it?

The feeling led him for the moment to wish himself separated from the church that he might join with his brethren. But did he *obey* this feeling? Did he argue like Mr. A., that the strength of this natural feeling, this "first and strongest sentiment," is sufficient to justify a compliance with its dictate? Most assuredly not. A spirit of patriotism separate Paul from his Lord and Master? "Neither height nor depth, nor length nor breadth, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, could separate" him "from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."

Then why is the instance of Paul brought to support the conduct of those who separate themselves from all the various and imperative duties to God in Christ Jesus, to follow merely the first and strongest feelings of their nature, when Paul pursued directly a contrary course? As well might the spirit and language of David, towards the palace of his God, be brought to prove his devoted attachment to architectural buildings, as the love of Paul for the people of God be adduced as a specimen of mere love of country: "Oh! Lord, how love I thy courts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; for I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord than dwell in the tents of wickedness." Let us give to feelings such as these a higher and a better name than nature and the world ascribe to them; let us erase from our list of virtues patriotism, politics, and country, and inscribe religion, obedience, and heaven.

In the Monthly Repository for January, 1833, is an article "On the Duty of Studying Political Economy," which displays so much talent in the writer, and possesses such a profusion of ideas as to make me diffident in at-

tempting to oppose it, and precludes the possibility, in this short address, of adverting to the various sentiments it contains. The writer must not, therefore, accuse me of injustice if I merely make one or two extracts, as they shall not be such as will (intentionally) pervert his arguments, but shall be for the purpose of more briefly shewing wherein we differ. I feel a wish, and I know it would be necessary in order to do full justice to my own views, to make many preliminary remarks before I entered immediately on those extracts, but the necessity of my drawing to a conclusion forbids.

The article, then, appears to me to be excellent, in shewing all the *would-be politicians* the necessity of their thoroughly understanding politics; it displays the evils of a *little* politics and of *bad* politics, and it anticipates and speculates upon the *probable* good that would arise from what the writer considers good politics; but it fails altogether in affording (what no doubt the writer intended it should comprehend) any argument to shew that interference in political matters, or any support to human legislation, is either the duty or consonant with the duty of the Christian.

There are arguments in it which shew the importance of *some people*, according to their profession and circumstances, studying and applying and enacting true political principles; but there is nothing to shew that it is the duty of the member of the church of God (who has other professions and objects), any more than there is to prove that ambassadors, from other courts, or that women and native children, should become our politicians and legislators. And yet we meet with assertions and conclusions which include *every* member of society in this duty: "Whether, then, the government be wise or foolish, ignorant or informed, it concerns the people to understand their own interest, (*viz.*) to learn political economy.

Viewing this science as we do, as involving the laws of social duty and social happiness, we hold it as a positive obligation on every member of society, who studies and reflects at all, to inform himself of its leading principles.”

“Neither will an honest man accept the benefits of the social contract, without learning how to fulfil his share of it.”

If the writer, by the first two of these quotations, meant merely to say that it would be right, as far as men's opportunities go, to inform themselves of those commercial and legal regulations and principles which affect their duties and their interests, (leaving those duties to be settled by a moral and religious standard,) I should quite agree with him; but when I find these sentiments standing in connexion with a train of reasoning, which is intended to shew that every man should therefore be a politician, I no more agree with him than I think that every man should be a lawyer; neither do his arguments prove the one any more than the other.

The writer goes on the assumption that all men are on the same moral level; that they all stand in the same relation; that their duties towards the world are all regulated by the same standard. He seems to exclude from his view all the grand and peculiar operations which divine revelation brings into the subject; he forgets that while some have only “a law within themselves,” others have an express law of God for their guide; he forgets that some are of the world, while others are “not of the world;” that while some have only the general social duties of the world to regard, that others have those “especially which belong to the household of faith.” All that he has said, therefore, does not reach my argument, for I speak “not of the world, but of those whom God has chosen out of the world.”

The other quotation, that no “honest man will accept

the benefits of the social contract without learning how to fulfil his share of it," is based on the same mistaken grounds when applied to my subject. If we were to enter fully into an answer, we should inquire what is meant by social contract, and fulfilling a share of it; but assuming that the sentiment together is meant to imply that every honest man must interfere in politics, I ask, Were the apostles honest men, was Jesus an honest man, were the primitive Christians honest men?

The benefits and blessings which surround the circumstances in which a gracious God has been pleased to place me in this life, I hold I may receive, without asking any questions about conscience, without making any offering of gratitude to the world's idol, or without any infringement of my honesty,—if I receive them with gratitude to that Being from whom alone cometh every good and every perfect gift, and make his revealed will the rule of my life and conduct. "An honest man not receive the benefits" without a return? What benefits? From whom derived? And to whom to be returned? And in what way? are questions which perhaps every man would answer differently, (and much more so the Christian,) and must be answered in a way very differently from what my answers would be before we could ever arrive at the conclusion, that therefore every man must be a politician.

Admitting (which I on the contrary protest against) that the power and authority which civil governors have usurped and set up, instead of establishing and submitting to the government given by God, becomes, under God, a benefit to me; the doctrine of a return to man for such benefits, is only a confirmation of our Saviour's charge against the rulers of this world, that those who "lord it over you are called benefactors." The whole sentiment

(and, in fact, the whole article, ingenious, excellent, and consistent as it is, as a mere *political* one), is based on the anti-christian principle—that we live unto men and not as unto God. And it goes on the groundless anticipation that men by their own exertions, and by human legislation, can and will effect the purification and perfection of human institutions, and bring about the universal peace and happiness of man in the present life; in short, that earth, under better *human* institutions, may become heaven. This is delusive, unscriptural, and dangerous. It is wisely ordained by an omniscient Creator, that this state should be one of trials, difficulties, and sorrows. He has wisely annexed oppression, injustice, and suffering to the dominion of man over man. He has graciously afforded proofs that peace and happiness can be felt only in proportion as we *quit* the principles and maxims of the world, and are guided by his righteous laws, and he holds up before us in revelation, (as characteristic only of the kingdom of his dear Son,) the blessed period when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord; and when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and the leopard with the kid, and there shall be nothing to hurt or to destroy in all the holy mountains of the Lord.

To possess a hope, or to hold out an anticipation, that the laws and institutions of men can effect the like happy circumstances, obscures the majesty of divine truth, and weakens the divine promise as a motive to religious obedience, and is akin to the rebellion which was urged on by the cry, "Come, let us go and serve other gods, which the nations have set up." Besides, how specious is the language, "contract," and "without learning how to fulfil his share of it," when applied to the duties of the disciple! As a Christian, my life is not a life of *contract* with civil government, but only of *obedience* to it. To the man of

the world, therefore, the language and argument of the writer forcibly apply, but on me and my arguments they have no bearing whatever.

If by fulfilling an equal share were meant returning an equal good, (and this alone can be obligatory on any principle where there is no specific duty contracted for,) then I contend that this share is abundantly advanced, without any interference in politics, by that disciple of Jesus who performs the duties which his religion points out; who submits to the laws of his country; who pays and contributes to the burdens imposed upon him; who joins not in incurring any of those expenses which civil legislation imposes; who gets none of the rewards of civil services, no applause, no pension, "but through evil report and good report" holds up to those around him better laws, better principles, better hopes; who diffuses around him, by his example and his teachings, a course of blessings which the world can never give or take away; I say this man performs more than his share of social good, and if this is what is meant by social contract, my hypothesis remains unmoved, by the false charge of dishonesty on the non-politician.

The writer, in speaking of the application of moral principles, comes to this conclusion: "No man, therefore, can either teach or practise morals well, however sound in his general principles, unless he knows the circumstances in which his principles are to be applied. A clergyman may preach well on justice, and may have the most earnest desire to practise and encourage this virtue, but he more than undoes his own labour if he persuades his people to countenance the interference of government in the employment of private capital. He may thus be injuring the interests of thousands, while he advocates the principles of justice."

Now does not all this practically shew how much safer

and better it is to let *government and politics alone*? It will not do to say that it only proves the necessity of men learning more correct political principles, for it is a fact, that, let men study them ever so long, they will still differ as to which are correct; and we see here, by the writer's own shewing, that a man may sincerely do mischief to thousands by his intermeddling with the affairs of civil government. "No words can describe the evil of proceeding on a false principle, or of erring in the application of a right one in concerns so momentous as those of society;" and as no man can put into practice even the principles of morals well, unless he knows the circumstances in which they are to be applied, will not the prudent man, the Christian, see and feel how impossible it is for him to apply and enforce principles and measures on the great mass of society, when the various and complicated circumstances of such society cannot possibly come within the scope of his finite knowledge?

For the Christian, then, to become a legislator and politician, he must dispense with the two leading principles of moral conduct, viz. a knowledge of the circumstances under which he acts, and divine authority for so acting.

The writer, after arguing the utility of studying political economy, gives a lovely description of its beauty, and which *almost* makes me say with Paul, "I could wish myself separated from Christ for my brethren, according to the flesh."

The utility, however, of understanding political economy as well as admiring its beauty, I by no means condemn, and should wish these considerations ever kept distinct from an *interference* with that economy, or a meddling with its beauty. I have before admitted, that it is "right, as far as our opportunities go, to inform ourselves of those regulations and principles which affect our

"duties and our interests ;" and wherever beauty can be seen, whether in nature, morals, or politics, it is right to cultivate the pleasure. But these things will be done by the disciple of Jesus in a manner and with an object quite different from those of the politician.

Political economy is to the Christian what the manœuvres and intrigues of a Coster is to the city tradesman. They are worthy of his notice ; it is of "*utility*" that he should know and understand them, but he need not be informed that it is not his duty, but will be at his peril, if he *becomes a party in the matter*.

The "*beauty*" of political economy (the theory of man) is to the Christian what the republic of a common ant-hill is to the naturalist. Their little plans and processes may amuse and delight ; contemplation will connect their industry, perseverance, and success with the moral virtues of man, and thus enhance the beauty, and dignify the pleasure ; but he need not be told to withhold his meddling hand from their little operations.

And shall the member of the kingdom of God lack wisdom ? Cannot he understand and admire the plans of human governments, and the mode in which his God directs them to their final purpose, without thrusting his unholy hands into the arrangements ? If not, "the children of this world are indeed wiser in their generation than the children of light."

There is one other objection which I have already anticipated, and partly answered. It is said, "Civil governments are necessary : how could we preserve order without them ?"

If I grant this necessity under the present state of things, my position, that Christians should not interfere with them, is by no means invalidated. I may be told that war is necessary to take off the surplus of society, or as a scourge to the nations. I may be told a thousand

things are necessary as things are; but my question returns, Ought they to be so, and does that necessity justify the believer in taking a part in and giving his support to them?

My views by no means exclude the necessity among men of civil governments: the necessity will continue until men seek for the knowledge of the Lord, and are willing to accept of his divine government; but the duty of the Christian is not to encourage the necessity, or to do any thing to prolong the existence of the former, but to do all that in him lies consistent with the latter. I do not believe that the church of God will become universal on this side the grave. Revelation clearly teaches that the subjugation of the nations must be effected during that period for which the believer is here preparing.

But if I am asked, What could we do without civil governments? I answer, and with confidence, do much better without than with them, if men would but accept and act upon the constitution, government, and laws given by God through Jesus and the apostles. Why will men despise this great charter of liberty and salvation? If they would but adopt it, they would find it rise in its adaptation to human nature and human wants, as far above human domination as the wisdom of God is higher than the foolishness of man.

The kingdom that should be regulated by it would be blessed indeed; it would shine as a light in the world; on its walls and bulwarks would be inscribed "a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people," and its song of joy and gratitude would be "blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord."

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